Yomigaeri No Maou

The Resurrected Demon King *

written by Okano Yuu（丘野優）

Demon King Luruslia Nord; defeated by the hero, and someone who should have died.

He had a number of things left undone, and a number of problems left unresolved, but following the slogan that ‘evil will be destroyed’, he should have disappeared.

However, for some reason, he had miraculously gained a second life as a human.

This details the life he leads from then on.

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Author: Okano Yuu| 丘野優

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“I am a novelist (technically speaking). I write novels on『小説家になろう [‘Become a Novelist!’ syosetu.com/]』.

http://mypage.syosetu.com/233968/ I write for various genres.

Alphapolis is currently publishing my novel,『平兵士は過去を夢見る[A Common Soldier Dreams of the Past]』.

I would be happy if you picked up a copy.”

[Note: I’ll probably be trying my hand at 平兵士は過去を夢見る, and probably getting a copy of volumes 1 and 2 once a few other things I want release. I don’t use Honto, so for me it’s cheaper to buy things in bulk. Perhaps volume 3 will be out by then. Anyway, here’s someone else’s guide to buying (a.k.a. supporting Oka)]

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Chapter 1 – Prologue

In the face of justice, evil will perish.

This is true, regardless of the era.

The embodiment of evil will be turned to cinders by the hand of those who embody righteous thinking.

The world will be bathed in light, the darkness will scatter, the world filled with radiance, and then the land will be granted eternal blessing.

It was the same in his case.

Evil had to perish; the story wouldn't end otherwise, and for that reason he had to fall.

He bore that fate, that destiny.

And truly, in front of this eyes stood the embodiments of justice.

One stood boldly, wielding the holy sword that was now illuminating the dim hall of the Demon King's Castle, and with a holy woman, an archmagus, and a sword master in tow.

Bearing the hopes of humanity on those small shoulders, the one who tirelessly worked to make those hopes a reality.

They were the one called the "hero".

Were it possible, the demon king would have preferred them not come.

It would be better if nobody came for eternity, so he thought.

However, that wish of his was easily betrayed.

“You have come, O Hero!”

Though he felt resignation, so as to not let it show, he mustered up the loudest voice he could, and received them; the four who shouldered the hopes of humanity; the four who possessed greater coruage than anyone.

He slowly glared at each one of their faces.

No matter which it was, he could feel anxiety, and fear from them.

However, that was probably inevitable.

After all, they were standing there exposed before the one who ruled over all the demons in the land.

After all, one who possessed such great power that he could easily topple a city, or a country, was standing there before them.

On the contrary, it was praiseworthy that even now their faces held no resignation despite this.

Humans had foolishly come here to challenge him.

Hundreds of humans had perished before the might of the demon king.

The courage that brought them here despite this was praiseworthy, he thought.

The hero spoke.

“Are you, the demon king?”

“That’s right. It is indeed I, who am the master of this castle; the mighty one who reigns over the demons[/magic]; the demon king.”

Though a snigger about his arrogant lines escaped him, this too was what you could call ceremony.

He clearly named himself before the hero whose eyes housed great courage.

“I see. Then… let us settle this. Having come this far, there’s nothing left to say…”

Though it was obvious, the hero’s goal was the destruction of the demon king.

The demon king’s goal was also the destruction of the hero.

This was the logic of the world.

Even if there existed those who held doubts about this, and even if it was the demon king himself who felt this way, the demon king knew very well that there was no meaning in this.

Everything had already passed the turning point.

The time when things could still be talked out had gone by a long time ago.

Because of that, without saying a word, the next moment was already decided.

The hero who brandished the holy sword that was pointed his way.

The archmagus who began chanting his spells.

The holy woman who had chanted the scriptures for purifying evil.

The sword master who had begun strengthening his body, with power filled to the brim.

Without any hesitation, the four of them came together at the demon king to kill him.

They wished from the bottom of their hearts for the enemy of humanity to disappear.

After all, humanity's hatred towards the demon king had already passed the point where dialogue was possible.

That's why their attitudes were extremely matter of course.

However.

It was the same for the demon king.

It was the same for demon race.

He understood that the ending wasn't something easy to discover.

That at some point they needed to give up, accept, forgive, and join hands was something he also understood.

However, his heart couldn’t accept it.

He had devoted himself to hatred; a desire to rampage until he was exhausted incessantly tempted his heart.

This was something he thought each time he turned his eyes towards those who had clouded his eyes with hatred.

‘We’re exacting revenge on those who not only endlessly killed our brethren, but even denied our right to exist; what’s wrong with that?’ he would think.

‘We’re answering hatred with hatred; what’s wrong with that?’ he would think.

He understood that logically, this would bear not a single result; it was something close to self-satisfaction.

However, even if it wouldn’t bear any result, they could feel self-satisfied.

Their hearts would feel better.

And this wasn’t the case for only the demon king; the same could be said of all the brethren who attacked humanity.

Because of that, though it wouldn’t bear any fruit, he would tell himself that it was necessary as a foundation for the future of the demon race, and continued to fight.

In the end, at this moment, he thought from his heart that he had surely been mistaken, but even so, there was nothing he could do about it.

To begin with, the one who bore the responsbility in the beginning was humanity.

Though it sounded like an excuse, the demon king thought about the

cause of this situation.

Long ago, humanity had decided that those who lived by magic; demons, were a harm to this world.

After all, unlike magic beasts which were no more than animals, humans had labelled the demon race who clearly possessed intelligence, reason, and culture as a harm to the world that they wouldn't accept.

And then they declared that killing demons as one pleased, stealing their lands, and plundering their property was fine.

From the eyes of the demon race, it was the conduct of a thief, and nothing more than the logic of a robber.

Despite this, as though it were natural and just, humanity used the light of god as a matter of course to claim authority, declared the demon race as enemies of god, and plotted their destruction.

Those kind of people, and the demon race.

Just which were closer to evil?

In front of the hero party, he thought again about the history of the humans and demons.

And suddenly thought,

'In the end, both of them were probably wrong.'

‘Both the demon race, and the human race, had probably fatally erred in their choices’, he thought.

It was for this reason that despite both being humanoids who shared intelligence all the same, without comprimising or discussing, they turned their swords on each other, and ended up murdering each other.

Neither had thought back on their mistakes before it came to this, and continued to follow their warped convictions.

That the result was that they turned their trump cards, the hero and the demon king, against each other, might have been in a sense, truly a matter of course.

The victor of this fight would probably hold the world as a conqueror.

Would the demon race rule over the world, or would the humans reign supreme?

This was something that depended on the outcome of this battle.

It was something stupid.

It was something pointless.

Even if one of them won, they would probably begin new fights among themselves.

And once again, they would kill a lot of people, and then one day perish.

It was truly stupid.

Couldn't they stop it at some point?

Was there nothing they could do about it?

At the very, very end, the demon king lamented over being unable to find an answer. However, even so, it was impossible that he and the hero could join hands now.

Right.

Both humans and demons had reached a point of no return.

Having come this far, there was nothing left to do, but fight.

There was nothing they could do, but fight.

Without them forcing a conclusion to this, the war wouldn't end.

That's why...

Having thought this far, the demon king naturally cycled mana through his body, turned to the heroes, and took a stance.

The one who held stronger mana than any demon, that held a stronger body than any being, was the personification of absurd strength; the demon king.

Just by casually collecting the greater mana in his body, the walls and floor of the castle cracked, and the heroes were faced with a Pressure strong enough that they wanted to despair.

It’s probable that a normal human would have died simply by being there.

However, even with a cold sweat, the heroes still stood.

The reason they still lived was because of the power they had trained over a long journey, and the fact that they held enough mana that they could be called monsters by normal standards.

The had overcome countless training, and even being granted the divine protection of spirits and god, they had already ascended to a level closer to what you would call a demon, rather than a human.

It was doubtful whether they had a place to belong to in their homelands, after defeating the demon king.

Humanity was terribly afraid of those who held great power.

It was for this reason that they feared the the demon race, and ended up persecuting them.

That’s why when they triumphantly returned to their homelands after defeating the demon king…

No, it was probably a needless worry.

Before thinking about that, he had to think about defeating the people in front of him, thought the demon king, focusing himself.

The mana released from his body became increasingly enormous, and just the emission of his mana was enough to overwhelm the hero and his companions.

The holy magic that the holy woman used was wrapped around the heroes, and was successful in weakening the power of the demon king.

However, perhaps because even this wasn't enough, the four of them were sweating from their brows, and while bracing their legs, they turned sharp gazes towards the demon king.

However, it was not as though they couldn't fight, and neither was it a major hindrance.

Perhaps because they thought that their chances of winning would decrease with time, the party of four exchanged looks with each other, and without testing the waters, as if to take the demon king down in one hit, immediately released the mana that dwelt in their bodies and began exercising their skills.

Following that, the heroes having smoothly finished their battle preparations, charged at the demon king with speeds unimaginable from the humans that had challenged him previously, and with attacks quite capable of taking a life, charged at the demon king with all their strength.

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The battle between the heroes and the demon king was made extremely grand.

However, everything will eventually meet its end.

Thus.

"…Ka, hah-…"

The holy sword was stuck in the demon king's chest.

The holy light that repelled darkness and magic, being released by the holy sword, was purifying the power of darkness that clad the demon king.

The demon king couldn't see the faces of the hero very well.

The hero clad in full body silver armour was even now donning a face-mask that revealed nothing but their eyes, after all.

Very few of the people who challenged the demon king had been so completely protected, but the magic that the demon king could use covered a great number of spells.

On the contrary, if you wanted to truly defeat the demon king, this much was natural.

Having said that, no matter how strong normal iron armour might be, it wasn't enough to defend from even one attack from the demon king's sword or magic.

However, even fragmented and scratched, with a number of indentations, the armour worn by the hero retained its original form, and was a treasure of an armour, made not of iron but of special materials like sacred silver{mithril}, stalwart iron{orichalcum} and god iron{hihi'irokane}.

The demon king was pierced by a sword that held a power that was the natural enemy of mana and darkness, and in his receding consciousness, as he looked behind the hero, the companions there were still on guard, pointing their staves and swords at him, and like the hero, they were clad in mana and holy spirit, befitting of their status.

It meant that their preparations were perfect.

Thinking this, a smile escaped the demon king.

That his loss here might have been a matter of course, he thought.

As for why, it seems that justice would always triumph, after all.

The hero, was justice.

And the demon king, was evil.

It was a ‘truth’ that had been passed down from a long time ago.

From the perspectives of humans, it was the Truth.

Because of that, it was correct that he had lost, thought the demon king, in the depths of his receding consciousness.

Perhaps because they had found question with the demon king’s expression, the hero spoke to him with a puzzled expression.

Even though conversation should have been impossible, having come to this.

Things like dialogue between the dying demon king, and the hero who was the cause, were needless after all.

However, the gears of fate had turned in an unexpected direction.

Thinking back upon it later, it might have been the moment that a great number of things had changed.

It was a moment of such importance.

“…Why, do you laugh. Are you scheming something?”

“No… nothing at all. Just…”

“Just?”

“The daughter of a friend has her birthday tomorrow, you see. I was just thinking that it’s a shame that I fall here…”

Thinking that it would be wrong somehow to speak the truth, the demon king spoke of something else.

Of course, it was not a lie.

That one of his subordinates and friends had a daughter whose birthday was tomorrow, was the truth.

And that had the heroes not come today, the demon king would have attended that celebration, was also the truth.

But now, that day would never come.

To steal away the demon king’s life for eternity, the hero’s sacred sword continued to release holy spirit.

From the day the demon king perished, the demon race would surely be face persecution.

The humans would do as they liked to them, and they might disappear as a species.

His friend’s daughter would probably lose her young life.

Considering all this, the demon king shed tears.

Seeing this, as though surprised, the eyes that peeked through the hero's face plate widened, and as though having noticed something, the hero grimaced.

And then for what seemed like an eternity to the demon king, the hero quietly began to think about something, and nodding as though they had come to some conclusion, they wrang out words from their throat.

"It wasn't… a lie, huh."

For some reason the demon king felt from that voice a human kindness that he hadn't up until now.

Even though the hero's gaze had been filled with that much hatred and killing intent up until just a moment ago, the demon king could feel warmth from their voice.

Because of that, the demon king suddenly followed a whim.

At the very, very end, he decided to throw away his despair, and the hatred he couldn't abandon, and decided to try honestly speaking what he already knew.

"Of course… Hero. …Right, this is the end… I shall tell you the truth… That up until now, what you and I have done, and what will continue into the future, is nothing more than slaughter. Can you understand that whether the demon race, or the human race, when it comes to what matters, there isn't a difference at all?"

"What are you saying…?"

To the hero who had been taught that killing the demon king was justice, perhaps this was something that they couldn't understand.

However, right now, having come to this very moment, the eyes of the hero were not stained with hatred.

They were in the true sense of the term, the eyes of a righteous person.

They were the eyes of a person who would truly look at the truth.

The demon king felt this, and believing in himself, he decided to speak some of the truth.

"...Hero. You may have been taught by the church that we demons are the envoys of evil, but you probably understand from looking at me. That how demons behave, and how humans behave, are completely the same... If you do not believe it, then it's fine for you to check this with your own eyes from here on. You'll probably see it. You'll probably feel doubts about the slaughter of all demons by the orders of the chuch... At that time, if you feel even a little something... then for the future of the demon race, no, of humanity and demonkind..."

His consciousness became distant.

He could feel all of the substance that composed his body turning into magic {ether}.

The hero looked like they were brooding over it.

They went over the demon king's words, and felt as though they could understand it.

Seeing this, having at least planted some sort of seed, the demon king was able to feel something close to satisfaction.

His consciousness became dark.

And then, a voice suddenly reached his ears.

“Understood… I’ll, believe your words. I’ve decided to look properly at the demon race, without holding suspicions.”

At that moment, the demon king noticed for the first time.

That certainly, he had thought that their voice was a little high for a man’s, but in fact it was a different matter.

Because after all, what came from the hero’s mouth, was the gentle voice of a woman.

The hero, was a woman.

Whilst feeling shock at what he realised at the very end, he felt amused at the nice memory he’d be taking the underworld.

In his steadily darkening field of vision, what he saw at the very end were the faces of the hero’s companions.

For an instant, the face of the holy woman entered his blurry sight.

Though he’d have thought that she’d look refreshed, having defeated the demon king, she was unexpectedly grimacing.

Even though the hero and the other two weren’t grimacing… why?

Even though he thought that he was prepared to die, he felt regret at

just that issue.

However.

‘If it’s that hero, then surely, they’ll consider the future of the demon race as well, won’t they?’

Dying with such an optimistic hope was surely a blessing, thought the demon king.

And thus, on that day, the demon king, known as the strongest demon in the world, had his life taken by the hero, and disappeared from the world completely.

‘And they all lived happily ever after. The end.’, in other words.

[‘medetashi, medetashi’]

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It was said that souls existed.

Far in the distant past, the almighty god who had created all of the world, had given birth to all living things as equal.

It was a legend passed down in the demon race.

It was quite different from what humanity believed in.

However, that didn’t mean that because of this, the demons held prejudice against them as a race.

Because humanity had attacked, the demons had certainly held hatred towards them, but that didn't mean that they denied their right to existence as a race, or any such vein of thought.

Humans, demons, magic beasts, demi-humans; their characteristics varied, but their souls were created the same, and once they died, they would reincarnate eternally; so the demon race believed.

Because of this, when the 100th Demon King Luruslia Nord opened his eyes, he was not all that shocked at what he saw before him.

"...My, my, you've woken up. Good morning, Luru."

It was a beautiful, human female.

Silky black hair like the night, and red eyes like blood. Smooth, white skin like light snow, and so wonderful a figure that it seemed that someone had carefully sculpted her.

Standing there was woman so beautiful that even women of the demon race, and ancient race{elven race}, the so called beautiful pair, would run away in shame.

For a member of the demon race that held no thoughts of prejudice, whether they were humans or elves, deeming beautiful things as beautiful was a matter of course.

Because of that, the human woman standing there was not something that merited particular shock.

'However, it's just...', thought the demon king.

‘No matter what, for a human, the person in front of me is much too big’, he thought.

For the demon king who was relatively large, even amongst demons, their sizes were really very different.

Of course, it wasn’t as though there weren’t people that were larger than him, but basically nobody was so large that their arm was bigger than he was.

There was no conclusion other than the fact that this woman was of a different race.

A woman of the giant race{titan race} perhaps?

If that was the case, then her size wasn’t impossible but…

However, having thought that far, the demon king mentally tilted his head in confusion.

After all, he already knew quite clearly what race the person in front of him was.

From the very language they spoke, and the accent of the language, it was clear from the start that they weren’t a member of the titan race that boasted a gigantic body, but what could be called a human.

Despite that, why were they so big?

Wondered the demon king, when suddenly,

‘No, it might be the opposite,’ it occurred to him.

It wasn't that she was big, but that he was small.

Such a thought struck him like divine revelation.

And thinking about it like that, he naturally grasped the situation.

Not long ago, the woman before his eyes had called him Luru.

The demon king was far smaller than the woman before him.

And, right now, he could feel that he was face up on some kind of soft cloth.

This was… that kind of phenomenon. The one handed down within the demon race.

So thought the demon king, in that instant.

In other words.

"Now that you've awoken, it's lunch time."

The woman bore her body just a little from the loose clothes that she was wearing.

For a moment he wondered how exactly this was supposed to be lunch, but if the situation was as he had predicted, then what she was doing was understandable.

He happened to catch sight of his own hand.

His small, plump hands bore not even the slightest resemblance to his old ones.

It was as if… right, it was as if they were a baby's.

The moment the thought this, he could feel his consciousness becoming distant.

It was unlike sleepiness; the way he lost his consciousness was extremely abrupt, and moreover it seemed that it was absolutely unopposable.

Why, he wondered, whilst he could feel his body beginning to move on its own.

The body that held its hand up, as though searching for something,

Seeing that, with a smile, the woman held his body in her arms.

That sweet, milky scent, and that gentle atmosphere brought to mind an existence from a long, long time ago.

That was…

"Mn, mn. You're hungry, aren't you, Luru…? Mum is going to feed you now."

Mother.

Right.

The woman before him, was his mother, huh.

The instant he was convinced of that, the little remains of his consciousness were swallowed by darkness.

He only realised that his reason was being submerged in darkness by instinct later on, after this kind of thing had repeated over, and over again.

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After a few days had passed, the demon king discovered a few facts.

First of all, that he had been reborn as a human.

His mother, or at least the person that seemed to be, certainly showered the demon king———— currently named Luru it seemed ————with deep love.

She gave him meals, faced him with smiles, took care of his business, and always looked happy around him; and he definitely didn't feel that this person's feelings were a lie.

Whether a human's feelings, or a demon's feelings, there wasn't very much difference.

To the demon king, this was an obvious fact.

Furthermore, souls reincarnated.

Humans, demons, and all the other species had the same soul.

All humans beings after losing their bodies would be reincarnated as other species.

If they had behaved badly, they would be reborn as a small animal or bug.

So it was said, back when he was a demon king. Because of that, he didn't feel the situation was particularly unnatural.

He was certain that he had been killed by the hero, and surely after that, his soul had been reborn as a human.

Luru was flexible enough to believe that.

Moreover, that humans had an extremely large number of social positions was a fact that he had known since he was the demon king.

The human race was different to the demon race in that regardless of the fact that they were the same race, they established a wide number of countries, and used a number of different ruling systems.

Monarchies, republics, federations *etc*. ————a number of different types of countries had existed, and the position that their household, or their families held, was an issue of great importance to humans, and had great power over their lives.

The demon race had collected as one, but the other humanoid races were not so.

Because of that, besides just knowing that he was a human, Luru felt he needed to know what position his family held, and decided to listen in on the conversations of his mother and the other inhabitants of the house in order to gather knowledge.

And then, the result he arrived at was that his house was located in a

monarchy known as the Kingdom of Renard. His family was a lower class noble family, his father served the country as a knight, and was not at home right now, having gone to the royal palace.

To Luru, these findings were not particularly bad.

That he wasn't extermely poor was something that he managed to realise even lying down, because of the number of people that walked about the house normally. On top of that, he had guessed from things like his mother's complexion, and the people who seemed like servants that occasionally came to the room, but once he was sure this was the case, he found it was good enough to be relieved.

However, what he did find strange was that he had no recollection of the country's name, and the magic that his mother and the servants used were clearly different to the magic he knew.

The Kingdom of Renard was a country with a longer history than its neighbours, or so it seemed from the light conversations that his mother and the servants had, but if so, shouldn't he have known about Renard? So wondered Luru.

At any rate, they had fought bloody battles with the human kingdoms.

He clearly remembered where each country was, and what kind of country it was.

But no matter how much he searched his memories, he had no recollection of a country called the Kingdom of Renard.

This was something bizarre.

It was essential to investigate further once he grew a little bit older, and was a little more free to act, he thought.

As for the magic, it had definitely existed in his previous life, so that much wasn't anything to talk about.

However, the way they used it was strange.

First of all, for some reason his mother and the servants used rings or wands[/staves] as a medium, and on top of that, they used really long incantations.

What they used was nothing but low class magic such as spells to produce light, but that kind of magic could be used without a medium, just by thinking about it.

But despite that, it seemed they couldn't do so; this was extremely mysterious.

Besides that, the chants were strange as well.

For example, the chant they used to produce a ball of light in the magic language was,

『Light… Call… Start… Burn』

and such and such – a chant made from a considerable mess of grammar and vocabulary.

Just why was this happening?

This too was something that he needed to investigate, thought Luru.

Finally, there was the case of Luru himself.

Luru held memories of being a demon king in his past life.

Assuming that he had been reborn, this might not have been such a strange situation.

However, in the first place, when it came to rebirth, Luru didn't think of inheriting memories as something normal.

This was because when Luru was the demon king, almost nobody said that they had memories of their past lives. On top of that, even if they did, they were nothing more than the lies or pranks of madmen.

Despite this, Luru could clearly recall his memories of his past life.

When he was lying about as a baby, he clearly established that his memories weren't fragmented.

There might have been the normal degree of forgetfulness, but there was no case of any unnatural loss of memory.

It was to the degree that he could clearly remember being stabbed by the hero.

Certainly his memories of dying were hazy, but it was to the same level as being unable to remember the moment when you fell asleep.

At any rate, the fact that he could clearly remember his past life was a strange situation.

However, he felt that there was probably no chance that these were mistaken memories.

To begin with, Luru was a baby.

It could be said to be impossible for him to have made up such knowledge and stories without anybody teaching him.

Nevertheless, if you asked why he knew such things, remember such things, and could consider such things, the conclusion should probably be that he had inherited them from his previous life.

Being the case, then was there some deep meaning to this?

Or was there no meaning at all?

No matter how much he pondered this, he didn’t know.

Just, if there was some meaning…

He wanted to one day find out what it was.

/Chapter 1 END

Chapter 2 – The Issue at Hand

There were few things an infant could do.

They received food from their mother, slept according to instinct, and did their business.

It was just these three at most.

However, Luru had what infants normally didn't; a strong ability to think.

Because of that, he was able to consider thing, and arrange the information he heard from perking his ears up.

From the time when he clearly recognised that he held his memories as the demon king, each day he would listen up for the conversations that went on in his home, and a number of facts became clear to him.

What he learned about in most detail, was of course, information about his own family.

According to the conversations that his mother and the servants had, it seems that their family name was Cadisnola.

In other words, Luru's real name was Luru Cadisnola.

It seemed that his mother's name was Medea Cadisnola, and his father's name was Patrick Cadisnola.

They had probably said their names right after Luru was born, or perhaps around the time things had calmed down but unfortunately, Luru had no memories of the time between his birth, and the moment he recognised himself as the demon king, so it was only recently that he was finally able to hear this from a conversation between his mother and a servant.

Of course, just knowing the names of his parents and his family name wasn't enough to satisfy Luru's thirst for knowledge.

At present, Luru wanted to know a great number of things.

That's why he actually wanted to hear about more things in greater detail.

To that end, he had considered asking his mother or the servants directly, but right now he still hadn't reached the age where he could talk yet, and it would probably have been odd for him to suddenly start talking.

That's why for now, when he was hungry, or wanted to defecate, he would just cry and scream without using real words.

Even so, his mother and the servants would still speak to him, so he didn't feel that uncomfortable, and there wasn't any information he needed urgently so there was no problem but…

It was just that life as an infant, was to Luru, nothing more than idleness.

Eating and sleeping.

Once he compared days of doing nothing but that to his memories of being busy with office work or fighting as a demon king, it was such a helplessly idle lifestyle that even right this second, it felt like his mind would grow slow from it.

That's why after Luru gained self-awareness and gathered information for a few days, he started to wonder if there was anything he could do to kill time.

And to that end, he felt that he had to think about what he'd do from now on.

Luru had been born again as a human because of a strange incident.

Though he didn't know what kind of life he'd lead from now on, finishing his life without doing anything was much too boring.

That's why he wanted some kind of objective.

Moreover, there was also the fact that he felt that if he didn't have a goal, then in the end, he would die without having accomplished anything, just like his previous life.

And he would hate that.

He'd pass on being an idiot who wouldn't change even after dying.

In the past, Luru was the demon king.

Right now, he was a human.

Being the case, just what would he do from now on? Just how would he live from now on?

It was a profound question, and yet another issue.

It was for this reason that he spent a number of days seriously contemplating it.

For just how many days had he been ruminating over this?

Because of the complicated way in which the body of an infant perceived time, he couldn't say for sure, but during that time, Luru had reached an answer for now.

That is, he would live as he wanted. It was a very simple conclusion, and was an answer that held in a sense a great deal of freedom.

Could that be called an objective?

Wasn’t it just living randomly?

There were probably people who lived as such.

However, if you thought about it carefully, you could probably understand that this was definitely not the case.

In his previous life, Luru was the demon king.

Because he was blessed with a mighty mana and physical strength from when he was a young child, he had been burdened with expectations, and had most of his life planned out for him since he was small.

Naturally, Luru remembered that it would have been unacceptable for him to have lived freely as he wished.

And he had memories of being a little rigid, and feeling that he had to answer these expectations.

Because he was stronger than any other demon, he also had the responsibility to lead their race.

Because of that, he wasn’t particularly dissatisfied with his position as the demon king.

However, it was the truth that because he was in a position of responsibility, there were choices that he couldn’t take.

Holding the hand of humanity, and cooperating was one of those impossible choices.

That’s why Luru painted over his heart, and fought as the incarnation of revenge and war.

After all, the Luru in those days was allowed nothing but that.

He could do nothing but that.

However, it was different now.

Right now, Luru was the human child of a lower class noble family, and on top of that, he could feel from his parents words that they weren't wishing for him to succeed their office in the slightest.

In other words, they wouldn't mind if he lived as he wished.

In that case, I want to live a unbound lifestyle that I couldn't in my previous life, he suddenly thought.

And once he had come across that idea, he felt that it was and extremely interesting and wonderful one.

Certainly as an objective, it was much too vague.

So he feel that.

But even so…

He would live as he wished.

What an interesting ring that has to it, he thought.

And then, not leaving that thought as merely a thought, he began seriously considering it.

To freely live as he wished in this world.

He would absolutely, definitely, do so, he thought.

And for the sake of that, what he would probably need to do so, was power, he thought.

That the world wasn't so gentle a place that the absolutely powerless could live in was something that he knew much too well from his previous life.

Those who had no power at all would just be wounded, trampled on, and then killed.

The demon race held mighty power.

However, even that powerful demon race had been overrun not seldomly by the human race that used the violence of numbers.

Even the demon king himself had been destroyed by the group of four heroes.

All of it was because they lacked enough power.

That's why things happened the way they did.

That's why this time, he didn't want to end up weeping because of his lack of power.

No matter what, he wanted to gain enough power that he could stop raining embers[(figuratively)].

However, right now, Luru had the body of an infant.

He couldn't just simply start working out[training his body].

Even if he could, it would be after his body grew up a little more.

When he began to wonder how he would do so then, what came to mind first was the thought of his mastery over mana and magic.

Mana, magic, magecraft.

Those who manipulated these were known in his previous life as casters, magicians, and magi.

As for the distinctions between then, a caster was one who could personally invoke magic; a magician was one who was a certain amount more educated in magic theory, and could utilise magecraft in battle; and a magi was one who surpassed magicians, and was a magic specialist.

In the past, Luru was the world's strongest demon, and also the world's strongest magus.

The magic he fired off himself was matchless, and his understanding of magical phenomena was so deep that nobody else could reach him.

The archmagus in the hero's party was also a powerful spellcaster, and was a magician with deep knowledge as well, and was an existence like the demon king in this regard, but there was quite the difference in ability.

Compared to the demon king who possessed enough power to match the four heroes by himself, the archmagus' limit was one high class demon.

As for the hero, she could exchange rallies with the demon king on equal fotting for a certain amount of time, but even so, a few minutes or a few dozen minutes was her limit.

Even for the hero, had she been unable to land a decisive blow on the demon king, she wouldn't have been able to win.

The reason was that the mana the demon king held was much too powerful.

Though his base strength was already considerable, his seemingly

endless amount of mana could be used in body reinforcement magecraft without end.

The level that the hero had finally reached only after shaving down her soul, acquiring the divine protection of god and spirits and making use of a large number of magic tools, was a level that the demon king could reach by his pure ability alone.

Could he reach such a level this time as well?

While wondering about this, Luru aimed for a moment when his mother and the servants weren't in the room, and began to analyse the mana that dwelt within him.

This time, Luru had been born as a human.

In other words, this body was that of a human, and the mana that he was born with had a limit.

The demon race was powerful because from the moment they were born, they already possessed a pool of mana whose size had no match in the other species, and because Luru was presently a human, he shouldn't have been able to expect that much from himself.

However.

When Luru began moving the mana in his body, he noticed it.

That his mana pool was unnaturally massive.

It was in a sense extremely natural, but for a human this was clearly strange.

In other words, inside Luru who should have been a human, dwelt the same mana that he possessed as the demon king.

Luru noticed inside his body a seemingly limitless fountain of mana.

Even if he pumped it out, and pumped it out, it didn't seem to run out at all.

This was an extremely convenient situation for Luru, but at the same time it meant that he couldn't just readily fire magic out like he did in the past.

He held enough mana that if he carelessly fired magic and failed to control it, it was liable to easily turn the whole place into charred earth.

And he noticed some other problems as well.

Certainly he was used to this amount of mana.

It was the same amount of mana as he had as a demon king.

Because of that, he thought that using magic would feel the same.

However, the feeling of the mana coursing through his body was a great difference to how it felt when he was the demon king.

It was extremely difficult to flow mana through his body.

Having understood that a fountain of mana was pulsing in the depths of his body, he decided to flow it through his body to use body reinforcement, but it felt as though he were trying to cram more contents into an already full container.

It was probably a greater amount of mana than this body could contain, he thought.

Should it be called the difference between the bodies of the demon race and the human race?

However, even amongst humans, there were those who held massive

amounts of mana like the hero, and it was probably not impossible that his body could achieve the same thing.

Was it because the way he was supposed to do things was different, or was it because this body was immature?

It would be an important point of research from now on.

From now on he would be following this assumption, and would need to exert some effort, he thought.

His body being filled to the brim with mana meant that body reinforcement using mana was impossible, but then what about emission types?

It wasn't impossible to emit mana out, even without running a large quantity of mana through your body.

You could feel the source of your mana in the depths of your abdomen, and to draw it out from there you would need to make your mana flow a little, but if it was just that much, he felt he could do it with his current body.

However, a large problem was that testing it would be difficult.

If he made a mistake in his choice of magic, it was possible that it could give rise to great harm.

Though he was called the incarnation of evil in his past life, Luru was by no means a murderer for fun.

On top of that, there was no way that he would want to annihilate the mother that had given birth to him, nor the servants that had taken care of him.

That's why he had no choice other than to test out his magic, little by

little, starting with small scale magic.

After he grew up a little, and his range of activity widened[the range in which he is about to move about], he wanted to test out the large scale magic from his time as the demon king, but for now he had no choice but to give up on it.

Concluding as such, for now Luru decided to test out emitting mana from his body.

As for the method and technique needed to do this, he had thoroughly exerted himself to master these back when he was a demon king, and could do so correctly even without anyone teaching him.

He thoroughly knew the little tricks, the right feeling when doing so, and the principles behind it, and on top of that, mana in and of itself was the same whether you were of the demon race or the human race.

That's why if he started practising from this age, it should've been possible to use magic reasonably efficiently.

When he decided to try emitting mana as a test, he quietly closed his eyes, and slowly began to draw out mana from his abdomen.

And then he brought it out, brought it outside of him.

What he found was that there didn't seem to be any problem.

Certainly it was difficult to run mana through his body, but even so, it wasn't as though he couldn't do it at all.

He didn't know if it would become more easy to do so in the future, but that was what you'd call 'something to research'.

At any rate, it seemed that he'd be able to make do somehow.

Feeling relief at knowing his, Luru continued to practice.

/Chapter 2 END

Chapter 3 – The Village and the Visitor ✻

Seven years had passed by since the time Luru's memories as the demon king returned and he began his life as a baby.

He had passed over the days when he couldn't move, and since he had been able to move about on his own feet, you could say that Luru's life had undergone a dramatic change.

At any rate, as an infant, the only things he could look at were his parents, the servants, and excepting his parents acquaintances who would occasionally come by, there was nothing besides that except for the ceiling and bed.

Even if they took him out somewhere, it seems that they thought that having him out for too long was bad for his body, so would immediately bring him back into his room, and so there wasn't much time for him to observe anything else.

Compare to that lifestyle, just how were things now?

He was able to move as he fancied and pleased, and able to walk about as he pleased, and visit the places that he pleased.

Having overcome the period as a baby when he could do nothing, Luru truly felt that being able to walk was a marvellous thing.

Being able to go outside meant that there were many things he had learned, but first of all, that where Luru was living now was a residence located in a frontier village.

Though Luru's father was a lower class noble, he was different to common villagers in that he had greater prosperity in his property and lifestyle.

Having said that though, compared to the period in which Luru was the

demon king, the difference them and the other villagers was very little, and at best they lived in a slightly bigger mansion, had one more dish per meal. It was only to that degree.

Perhaps we should say that 'that's why', the other villagers thankfully didn't have a bad relationship with Luru's family, and though it wasn't as though they didn't show any respect at all, the majority of the villagers treated them friendlily so both his mother and father were able to live without many problems.

As for Luru himself, the villagers treated him kindly, and he didn't feel any particular discomfort with his village life.

If you forced him to say something, then perhaps he felt that it was a little strange having all these humans treat him kindly, but he only felt that way because he compared it to his time as a demon, and because of that, this much was obvious now that he was a human.

At first he hadn't been used to it, but as the same thing repeated, within a few years it had become a matter of course to him.

Even if his heart was that of a demon, he was able to get along this well and live with other humans.

'Could I not have made something like this possible when I was the demon king?' Though it wasn't as though he didn't have such feelings of regrets, he told himself that this was already in the past, and he strove not to get too grim about it.

Even if you regretted it, things that had already happened couldn't be changed.

Though the village was a called a frontier village, a highway passed through it, and if you wanted to reach another village, it wasn't that difficult as long as you had a carriage.

Because of Luru's age there was no way he could travel to other villages

himself, but he had at least been to the neighbouring town before.

If you compared his village to the town, as expected his village was a little behind in culture, but there weren't that many differences, and it wasn't as though his village was extremely poor either.

Like that, after observing various things, and looking into various things, the conclusion that he finally reached was that this village was a relatively good village to live in.

It was peaceful, the people were kind, and the people were prosperous enough not to starve.

It was a tranquil enough village that he even thought that it mightn't be bad to live out his life here until he died.

However, Luru had no intention of doing as such.

For what purpose had he been training up until now?

It was for the sake of leaving this village and travelling the world. It was for the sake of going on a journey.

Luru had decided to live as he wished, but that included going where he wanted; in other words, going on a journey.

Luru wanted to see the world.

He wanted to see with his own eyes where the world was headed after the end of the long demon-human war.

To that end, for the sake of acquiring the knowledge needed, while he was growing up, he indirectly asked his parents about the world.

Luru was the reborn demon king.

In other words, there should have been not a small amount of time that had passed since the conclusion of the demon-human war.

There was no objection to this matter.

However, the problem was just how long exactly that passed since then.

If it had only been one or two years then he wouldn't have particularly cared.

If it was only of that scale, then even if the demon race faced persecution, there would have been survivors amongst his fellow demons.

If he travelled the world, he would probably be able to meet his old acquaintances.

However, the scale of time that reincarnation took was not something so little, or so it was once said.

A decade or a century was nothing more than an instant to a travelling soul.

That's why it wouldn't have been strange for a considerable amount of time to have passed since Luru was destroyed as the demon king.

To confirm just how long it had been, he asked his parents.

Just when was now? Just how long had it been since the conclusion fo the war with the demon race?

What he found out was that since that day, the day that the demon king had been destroyed, it had already been some thousands of years, and

the war between the demon race and human race was almost nothing more than legends and myths but now, so they didn't know the details.

He had asked about whether the demon race still existed, but the answer was that they didn't really know.

There was a race called the demon race, but they were a different race from the one in the myths, and the species that the human race had warred with was nowadays referred to as the Ancient Demon Race, and it was said that had already left this world.

If he tried to explain things in line with that fact, then the demon race that had been defeated by the humans had probably been completed exterminated, and disappeared from this world as a species.

However, he believe that, nor did he want to believe that.

No matter how much the humans have overpowered the demons, was it realistic for them to have wiped out every single one?

No, it's probably impossible, thought Luru.

You couldn't have said that Luru just wanted to believe so.

But the demon race had a long lifespan, and their life-force was far beyond that of a human's.

No matter what, it probably would've been impossible to have erased every single one of them.

Hearing about this fact, Luru had managed to come up with an objective.

He would search for the demons, that is, the ones now called the ancient demons.

They were surely few in number.

However, it shouldn't have been the case that not a single one

remained.

If he believed in this, and travelled the world, he would find them.

There was still the matter of what he'd do after that, but for now, he wanted to confirm no matter what whether or not his brethren still lived to this day.

It was the responsibility of the one who had once led the demon race.

For that purpose, Luru had trained his ability to manipulate mana all these years, and had reached a fair degree of skill.

Of course if you compared it to his time as the demon king, then it was weak and rough perhaps you should say, but even so it was a large difference from when he had just been born.

At the very least, he could use magic needed for everyday life with no problem, and could use offensive magic to a certain degree.

As for large scale destruction magic, because he still hadn't found a suitable location to practice it, he hadn't used it even once since he had been born into this body so whether or not he could use it was an unknown, but he had this feeling that he probably could.

Even though it had been that difficult to circulate mana, he could now do it well enough.

Though it wasn't to the extent of the heroes who he had battled as the demon king, he had reached a level where he could apply it in combat.

It seemed that if it was just low level monsters, then at the very least he wouldn't lose.

If he continued at this rate, then the day when he could leave the village probably wasn't that far.

Strictly speaking, he felt that if he left right now he could make it work somehow, but even if he left, there wasn't a place where a seven year old could find work.

For now he had the goal of considering what work he would do after leaving the village, but at present he had no support[a backer, maybe a reference], so it would probably be difficult.

In other words, though you couldn't say that the day when he left the village was far away, he had no choice but to stay in this village for a few years longer.

However, his life in the village wasn't bad, so that was fine too.

Up until now he had been acting like a normal child, so he had managed to make a few human friends in the village.

Today he had promised to plan with those friends, and right now he was walking to their meeting place because of that.

He had left the house a little late, but it was within the margin of simple miscalculation errors.

After a while he reached the meeting place and saw a group of three boys and girls waving at him.

"Luru! You're finally here!? You're late!"

It was a red-haired boy who gave off a lively atmosphere, Rusty.

He was the same age as Luru, and a little while after being born they met each other, and since then they had always played together. In this village, he was Luru's longest friend, and one of his childhood friends.

His lightly freckled face was twisted in a little displeasure.

It was probably because Luru had come late.

Luru obediently apologised, and tried to appease him.

"Ah, my bad. Once I start reading books I completely forget about the time."

Luru's family had a library befitting of a lower class noble family.

Books were expensive and not something you could buy that easily, but even so they were necessary to education, and so his father dedicated a portion of his salary to increasing their book collection.

Luru's parents had taught him letters, so he could read.

That's why he had permission to read some of the books in his home.

"Books? What's fun about that? If you're a man then you need adventure! Let's go to the forest! The forest!"

Said Rusty, whose mood had bettered right after Luru apologised.

Rusty's dream was to one day leave the village and become an adventurer.

It was an occupation that didn't exist in Luru's time as the demon king, but these days it existed as a special job.

As for why it was a necessary occupation, to Luru's shock, it seems that unlike Luru's time, maps were uncertain, and there were a considerable number of regions that were yet unexplored.

Even places that people had once walked in the past were now regions whose layout and geography were now unknown, and the occupation 'adventurer' arose for the sake of searching them.

“‘Adventure, adventure’. Rusty, you haven’t passed Patrick-san’s swordsmanship lessons even now, right? Just when on earth will Rusty be able to leave this village, I wonder?”[‘ittai itsu ni naru koto kashira’]

The one who spoke the words that made Rusty grimace again was one of the childhood friends he had promised to meet today; a pretty girl with dull blonde hair and was known for her bright expression, Mii.

She was 7 just like Luru and Rusty, but perhaps because she was a girl, she had a more realistic outlook than Rusty did.

Having said that though, it was undeniable that she was still a little childish.

You could feel from her voice her fear of Rusty leaving the village.

It was clear as day that feelings of love for Rusty dwelt in her eyes, and because of that, she wanted Rusty to stay in the village forever.

Those feelings were understandable.

But those words had the opposite effect.

Rusty was learning swordsmanship from Luru’s father, Patrick, in order to gain the skill required to leave village, but Patrick was not soft.

Patrick gave Rusty a number of conditions regarding leaving the village.

They were that he needed to master the sword to a certain extent, and use his skill to hunt the low level monsters that lived in the forest at fixed intervals.

To a normal villager like Rusty who didn’t possess any talent, it was a relatively strict task, and because of that Rusty continued to train the sword each day.

Regardless, Patrick rarely praised people, so Rusty was steadily growing impatient.

He occasionally grumbled that he would never, ever receive a pass.

Mii had pointed this out to him just now.

Though a slightly threatening atmosphere began to surface,

“Now, now, isn’t it fine? It’s important to have a dream. I don’t think that he intends on holding you back, and if it does come to that, you can just think about it then, you know?”

The one who advised Mii and Rusty was the final person they had promised to meet up with today; a girl two years older than Luru, Yuuri.

Her silky, grey hair was beautiful, and with azure eyes, she was a fairly good looking girl.

You could imagine that in 10 years she would be quite a beautiful woman, but she loved Rusty.

It made you want to wonder, ‘just why is Rusty this popular?’ but it was because Rusty gave off this feeling that made you want to worry about him.

It was probably this that drew the two girls in.

While thinking that it was a pleasant[/cute/charming] situation, Luru often hung out with these three in the village.

“Well, it’d be nice that happened one day… More importantly, we’re meeting here because something is happening today, right? You still haven’t told me why we’re meeting here…”[Note: Luru uses ‘ore’]

Right.

Yesterday, Rusty told Luru to meet them here today, but when he had asked about why, Rusty replied “It’ll happen tomorrow, so look forward to it” and wouldn’t tell him.

It didn’t seem that they were just meeting here to play and he could tell this from the fact that when it came to today’s promise, Rusty seemed

quite excited, but he didn't know why.

In the end he couldn't find out even if he asked Rusty, so he still didn't know why they were gathered here today, but when Luru asked again just now, Rusty grinned and spoke.

"Yeah… Actually, the old man at the inn said that today, adventurers would be coming to the village! Real adventurers!"

At Rusty's words, Luru, Mii and Yuuri all widened their eyes.

Adventurers were essentially a profession that searched unexplored lands and ruins.

There were also those who did miscellaneous jobs like acting as the guards for merchants or travellers, but they rarely visited this village in the remote rural areas.

However, it wasn't as though they had never visited at all, and there were cases of low rank adventurers coming here as guards for travelling merchants.

However, those were different to the adventurers that Rusty spoke of.

"Real" he had said.

They were adventurers who were high ranked even amongst adventurers, and lived a lifestyle that you could truly call adventures.

Of course it wasn't as though to say that low rank adventurers were fake, but what they meant was that the low class adventurers were a little different from those you could call adventurers, so many referred to these as "real" adventurers.

Hearing this, Luru understood why Rusty was a little stimulated.

He was a boy that was aiming to become a real adventurer.

To him, it was the same as heroes visiting the village.

That's why he had gone out of his way to gather them.

He had probably planned to head with them to the gate where the adventurers would be coming from, and speak to the adventurers about lots of different things.

"If they're real adventurers, then wouldn't getting too close to them be dangerous? Lots of people say adventurers are a rowdy lot, you know." warned Luru, just in case.

Those who would be called real adventurers were, no matter what they were like, strong.

Because of that, there weren't a few among them who had slightly arrogant demeanours, and he had heard that it wasn't as though they had never acted violently before.

Of course if they went too out of hand then the organisation known as the Adventurers Guild would expel them and take away their rights as adventurers, meaning that it would be impossible to make a living.

Because of that, there was a certain limit, but if it was just at the level of badly treating some children who got too close, then they tended to overlook it.

That's why Luru had warned him, but…

"It's fine, I said! Adventurers are strong, and noble! They're not gunna do something like act violently!"

Said Rusty, without taking heed.

Mii and Yuuri made slightly anxious expressions, but it seemed that Rusty didn't see that.

Well, I guess boys with dreams are like this, sighed Luru.

Seeing Rusty behave like this, Luru gave up and decided that if anything happened, it'd be fine if he saved them himself.

Though Luru didn't know how far his strength went, if it was just at the level where they'd hold back because they were children, then it would probably be fine.

Thinking this, he followed behind Rusty, and the two girls that he dragged along with him.

/Chapter 3 END

Chapter 4 – Adventurers *

The entrance to the village was connected to a road that branched off a long highway that led all the way to the Royal Capital. Luru had often caught sight of Rusty saying things like “One day I’m going to leave down this road on an adventure!” whilst looking at this road.

From when he was old enough to perceive things, Rusty had always been like this, and his admiration towards adventurers was beyond description in some ways, thought Luru.

Luru had wondered many times just what had made Rusty so engrossed with adventurers, but it was probably that children in the village had little stimulus and too much free time, or so Luru concluded.

In the past when Luru had been in the war, he longed for a peace where you could gaze at the grass in a meadow being blown in the wind, but on the other hand, those who continued to live in such peace might have longed for war or adventure instead.

Even Luru had found these past few years of spacing out just a little boring.

It wasn’t impossible to understand Rusty’s boredom, having been born without something like a past life and having lived in this village all his life, nor his longing towards adventurers.

“…They’re here!”

While Luru, Rusty, Mii and Yuuri were vacantly waiting at the entrance to the village, they saw two figures from the other side of the road.

With the exception of merchants and acquaintances of the villagers, almost nobody came to a frontier village like this.

In particular, considering that nobody had said they were coming today, there was no mistake that the figures were the adventurers that Rusty had heard about.

Like that, the faces of the apparent adventurers finally came clearly into view.

They were a group of two.

One was a brawny, bold-looking man covered in hard armour, and lightly carried a greatsword on his back.

His face was more wild than handsome, and wore an expression you couldn’t feel any darkness from at all.

The other was a woman.

Having said that though, from those long ears of hers and her exquisite beauty, it was clear that she wasn’t a human.

Of the species that god had brought into this world from spirits, she was of the one that boasted the longest lifespan; the ancient race{elves}.

She possessed their characteristics.

The two of them seemed quite like adventurers, and from a glance you could tell that they didn’t do normal jobs; they gave off a feeling of having a few eccentricities.

From Luru’s perspective, he could feel that the two of them held quite the degree of skill.

The quality and quantity of the mana they were clad in, and their skill with it meant that indeed, there was nothing strange about calling people like them ‘real’ adventurers.

Even without being able to see through their real ability, the two of them gave off a difficult to describe atmosphere, so Rusty gazed at the two of them, eyes sparkling.

Even Mii and Yuuri's eyes seemed to say 'some really amazing people have come', and looked like they were looking at something rare.

Normally the two of them would have looked at Rusty's dream with less passionate eyes, but today alone was different.

I wonder if one day the two of them will be influenced by Rusty and aim to become adventurers as well, Luru suddenly wondered.

Not just a few young people left the village.

There was also the fact that the village alone wouldn't be able to support a large number of people, but above that was the longing for the city, and many ended up leaving for the city, saying they'd become adventurers like Rusty, or the apprentices of some merchant somewhere.

Although the village wasn't declining because of this, those left behind felt an indescribable loneliness.

Even if one day, they themselves would also leave.

While he was thinking about such things, the two adventurers finally arrived before their eyes.

Looking at them from up close, they didn't really seem to be the violent type, so Luru felt a little relieved that they didn't seem they would suddenly treat Rusty and the others as a nuisance and hit them or anything.

"What? You brats here to receive us?"

Just as they arrived at the village, having caught eye of Luru and his friends, the swordsman asked them this, rubbing his chin in confusion.

The elven woman smacked the swordsman's arm and spoke,

"As if. Sending kids to receive adventurers is dangerous, so nobody would do it. They're probably here to sightsee… Isn't that right?"

The elven woman tilted her head as she asked Rusty.

Though he was bewildered at suddenly being spoken to, perhaps thinking that it wouldn't be good to lie, he frankly muttered in a feeble voice,

"Y-, yes… That's right."

"Seeee? It was just like I said! In villages like this, there are quite a few kids who want to become adventurers, after all… You kids want to as well, right?"

"Yes… One day I'll become a real adventurer!"

said Rusty as he raised his hand above him.

Perhaps feeling something from that, the swordsman patted Rusty's head.

"Hahaha. I see, I see. Well, I'm not gunna say that it's impossible. The road to adventurers is open to everyone, after all… Just, if you're not saying it as a joke, but are seriously aiming for it, you gotta train. Adventurers who aren't skilled are just gunna die, yanno."

"Yes!"

“Good answer… Alright! Since you have some promise, how ‘bout I tell you some stories of my adventures! Or so I say, but there’s no point in standing around. Mind showing me to the inn?”

“With pleasure!”

Seemingly hitting it off in that odd manner, the two of them walked shoulder to shoulder into the village.

Luru watched them go.

Mii and Yuuri sighed and muttered,

“It’d be nice if you didn’t fire Rusty up too much…”[Mii]

“I wonder if boys stay the same no matter how old they get…”[Yuuri]

before chasing after the other two.

Hearing this, the elven woman’s face cramped a little, and bringing her mouth to Luru’s ear,

“…Their relationship seems a little complicated, huh? Those kids, I mean.”

“Mmn, well… It’s the so called ‘love triangle’ isn’t it?”

Absentmindedly replied Luru, as he watched the four of them go.

Seemingly agreeing, the elven woman went ‘mhm’ as she nodded, and

then tilted her head in confusion.

"Mn…? Huh, then what about you?"

It seemed that she found it odd that Luru wasn't involved in the love triangle.

Luru thought about how to appropriately express his position, and then spoke,

"I'm an onlooker, I guess."

"…You're a strange one, aren't you? You probably can't tell since you've only been in this village, but those two will grow up to be quite cute before you know it, you know? If you make a promise with one of them now… [promise to get married etc.]"

To the woman who was giving advice that an adult shouldn't give to a little seven year old [the advice is shameful, and not something an adult should be doing], Luru made a fairly ironic smile that you wouldn't find on a child, and replied,

"These kind of things are more fun to watch, you know."

The elven woman grimaced at his words.

Then, shaking her head,

"I retract my previous comments. You've quite the nasty hobbies, haven't you."

Well, I can't exactly deny that, thought Luru, and decided to end their idle chat for now as he changed the subject.

"Hahah, well anyway, even if you are an adventurer, you must be tired, correct? Shall I escort you to the inn?"

"Eh, yeah. Right. Please do. We were attacked by quite a few monsters on the way here, so I am pretty tired…"

It seemed that the woman really was tired, as she made a weary expression.

She'd best rest up early today, thought Luru, and he politely guided the elven woman to the inn.

Luru hadn't thought at the time that his concern would be wasted.

◇◆◇◆◇

"Oi, bring me some alcohol!"

"Me too!"

That night, the bar connected to the only inn in the village was doing good business.

Each day this bar would be lively with drinking village men, but today was even more loud and boisterous than usual, and the zeal was amazing.

And it was little wonder that the heart of that noisiness was the

adventurer pair.

The men in the village were happily listening to the adventurer man, as he told stories in a good mood.

The ones listening to his stories weren't just adults, but children as well.

To the villagers who had little stimulation, stories from outside travellers were one of their few pleasures, and would be popular enough to draw a crowd like this one.

Moreover, the two of them said that they would shoulder all of the alcohol bills today, so more villagers were gathered than usual.

The knowledge that the two of them didn't have overbearing, or violent personalities, and were just fun people quickly spread through the village via the owner of the bar, and because the villagers judged that it would be fine to have children there as well, the village children were gathered there too.

The women listened to the elven woman's stories, and you could even say that all the people in the village were gathering here by turns.

"Gran! Tell us your next story!"

Gran was the name of the swordsman adventurer.

According to Rusty, he was a high ranked adventurer, and it was obvious to those in the bar that there was no mistake about being one of the so-called "real" adventurers. You could feel the existence of danger and treasure from the stories he told, and the man had a strange persuasive power to him.

The name of the elven woman was Yuumis and there was no mistake that she was an elf, but despite the fact that elves normally never left their village, she was an oddball that was essentially a runaway.

With magical ability that was eminent even amongst her village, nobody could stop her from doing so.

You could tell that she was quite the tomboy.

The stories of their adventures were just one crisis after another, and mostly about how they overcame them, so they were interesting stories with a lot of climaxes and strongly drew in the interest of the villagers.

Usually though it was because one of the two had been caught up in some strange danger, and the other one would have to rescue them with this or that method, but regarding this the two of them would lay the blame on the other and get into a fight, which everyone would stir up.

"That time was because Yuumis had some weird curiosity. Normally if there was a weird protrusion in a ruin, you'd be careful, yeah? And yet this woman went "Well, it'll work out somehow", reaches out her hand from behind me and bloody pushes it! She's an idiot, yeah!? No matter how archeologically important it is, or what a historic discovery it is, you have to be alive first of all for it to matter! You have to value your life, damnit!"

"Hahhh!? If we're going to start saying that, then it applies to you as well! If I remember correctly… that started when you began speaking nonsense about joining some fighting tournament! While I was wondering why on earth I had to participate without even having it explained to me, when I found out that you had made some bet with a nasty noble I really wanted to slap you, you know! I mean, it's not like I really care! If it was only you participating, that is! But it was a party system, and not only that, but for only the two of us to participate when the maximum party size was 6!? You're an idiot! An idiot! Not only that, each time we won we'd get booed, and have weird assassins sent after us! Entering a tournament like that, are you retarded!?"

“You-,… That was because that noble bastard was trying to use the debts of a woman with sick children as a threat to make her his mistress, so I was just thinking of doing something about it…!”

“It’s because you do the same thing each and every time that there’s no end to it! Idiot!”

“If you’re gunna be saying that then don’t you do the same bloody thing!? That time when you started going on about collecting the horns of a dragon for medicine, I prepared myself for death yanno!”

“Th-, that was…!!”

That kind of back-and-forth continued the whole time, and the villagers enjoyed themselves listening to it.

Rusty was there too, but each time he heard the story of one of their adventures his eyes would sparkle even brighter, and in the end he ended up asking Gran to take him as an disciple, but was rejected and looked like he was about to cry.

However, when he dropped the conditions to being accepted as a disciple if he managed to become an adventurer, the negotiations started looking unexpectedly good.

According to Luru’s father, Rusty’s talent wasn’t too bad, and if it was just the level of becoming an adventurer, then in a few years he’d be able to make it happen.

It might have been almost a fact at that point that he would end up as Gran’s disciple.

The time passed enjoyably like that, and when the night got late, people started dispersing in small groups.

Everyone seemed to have had fun, and amongst the people happily returning home, Rusty, Mii and Yuuri looked extremely lonely.

It goes without saying when it comes to Rusty, but Mii and Yuuri seemed to have also become completely attached to the two of them after conversing for a little while, and it seems they were lonely about parting.

According to their chats in the bar, the purpose of the pair's visit this time was because apparently there was a ruin in the forest near the village, and Yuumis had a personal interest in it.

When they had said that it was just a personal interest in the end, you could really feel their eccentricity, and perhaps it was because they had come all the way here for such a reason that they could be called real adventurers.

They had touched upon the subject of the ruin in question during their talks in the bar, but it was apparently a place that the villagers knew well, and wasn't anything that amazing.

However, Yuumis was of the opinion that something was there.

So she said, and this was also because she had come across the same type of ruin in various places, and no matter where they were, she couldn't figure out what their purpose was, and was curious about it.

That's why to find out what they held in common, she was dropping in to visit those types of ruins whilst on her journey.

Regarding the ruin in question,

"That's definitely something built by the ancient demon race! That's it! There's no mistake!"

and so on, said Yuumis again and again, and each time Luru would jolt and react but,

"As if you'd just find ancient demon ruins lying about in the open! Even if you did find one, just how would you even decide that it was built by the ancient demons!"

and the like, retorted Gran, and Yuumis would become crestfallen.

In Yuumis' opinion, the legend of the ancient demon race was a type of romance.

It wasn't as though he couldn't understand those feelings, but Gran was the one who made more sense.

In this age it was considerably difficult to determine who made a relic, and when, and it was even more difficult when it came to the things the ancient demon race had built thousands of years ago.

At any rate, there were almost no documents on such a thing.

Even so, it seemed that there were many like Yuumis, who wanted to find them and desperately exerted herself to do so, but even to this date there was apparently no precedent of anyone having succeeded.

It was a difficult task.

In other words, they also had another reason for coming to this village this time, and were just taking the opportunity to check the ruin while they were at it.

It wasn't just Yuumis who did things like this, because Gran did as well. When it came to things like fighting tournaments, if they were in a nearby town, it seems that Gran would visit without fail.

It sounded like quite a fun journey to Luru.

It was because the two were the way they were, they said they would be heading to the forest early tomorrow morning, so the next time Rusty and the two girls would be able to meet them would be after they came back from the forest and had completed their goals.

You could understand their loneliness because for a while they wouldn't be able to meet with the pair, and even then, the two would soon leave the village.

However, even having said that, it was obvious that they couldn't just stay here forever.

And so all of them were taken home by their parents.

The last ones remaining were Luru and his mother Medea.

His father Patrick wasn't on break right now, and so wasn't at home.

Because of that, only the two of them came today.

Despite her appearances, Luru's mother was good with alcohol, and despite the fact that she had drunk quite the volume tonight, her demeanour was the same as always, and her gait was sure and steady.

"Luru. Shall we go home now?"

Said his mother, to which Luru nodded and replied,

"Yeah. Let's."

Waving back at the adventurer pair who were waving from the entrance of the bar/inn, the two of them began to walk.

Whilst walking hand-in-hand with his mother, he gazed up at the starry

sky.

The stars that were suspended there hadn't changed a great deal since those few millennia ago.

The stars that he had seen back then were still suspended there, and helped him notice the link between the Luru who was the demon king, and the Luru that existed now.

His mother looked up at the night sky as well, and suddenly, she opened her mouth,

"Hey, Luru?"

"What?"

"One day, will you also…"

Though she had begun saying something, she shut her mouth.

And then without continuing to the end,

"Mm~mn. It's nothing."

"Okay."

With just those few words, Luru could understand what she was going to say.

His mother knew.

She knew that one day Luru would also try to leave the village.

Why it was she had noticed this, he didn’t know.

However, when the day came that he was going to leave, he would need to have a proper talk with her.

So thought Luru, as he hurried home.

It goes without saying that at the time, Luru had no idea that a huge incident was going to occur tomorrow.

/Chapter 4 END

Chapter 5 – The Ruins ✻

No matter what it may be, repeated practice is essential.

There's a saying amongst those who need to maintain some kind of skill that goes 'Rest for one day, and you'll have wasted three', and this went for magic and martial arts as well.

Luru was one of those who believed in these words, so he would never miss practice for a single day. He could now move in ways that he couldn't as a baby, and practised not just magic, but swordsmanship too.

Early every morning after having breakfast, he'd practise mana manipulation and swordsman in a place with nobody else around, a little removed from the village.

The swordsmanship techniques he practised was the form he learnt in the past.

In other words, it was the ancient demon race style, or the demon king style perhaps you should say.

He was also learning modern human swordsmanship from his father, Patrick, but when he moved on a whim, it was his old swordsmanship that came out.

Of course he couldn't use these techniques when practising with his father.

His father was a knight that served the country, and not only was he quite skilled himself, it seemed that it was easy for him to see through the principals behind his opponent's techniques.

As long as this was true, if he started using the techniques that he used as a demon king, his father would surely feel that something was out of

play.

That's why Luru used nothing but modern swordsmanship when he practised with his father.

Furthermore, learning new techniques meaning practising with nothing but those new techniques was pretty good training, so he didn't have any complaints in particular.

For when he would leave the village one day, he'd try and preserve as many of the ancient demon style techniques as possible, and keep them as his trump cards, he thought.

For that sake, there was no choice but to reach a practical level of skill in the style his father taught, and because of that he focused and earnestly repeated the things his father taught.

Of course even so, his original style of combat was none other than the one that was supported by his huge mana and physical ability.

The reason he was able to make the most efficient and logical use of these advantages was because the demon race with magical and physical ability far above humans had spent long years creating these many techniques.

That's why it was necessary for him to practice the many techniques of the ancient demon style of swordsmanship and magic so that he would be able to use them without a problem in his human body, so he could use them when he really needed them in the future.

He continued to wholeheartedly train so he would be able to use both the human techniques and the ancient demon techniques.

This would take more than ordinary effort.

His days would start with training mostly ancient demon style techniques in the early morning, and then training with Rusty the human

swordsmanship he had learned his father once the sun had risen.

The days when he trained with Rusty were often arrangements from the day beforehand, and it wasn't something they did every day.

Because of that, it wasn't rare that he would spend the whole day training by himself as he did today, and immersing himself in training ancient demon techniques all day.

Listening to the cries of birds in the morning mist during training calmed him down, and he could feel his mind sharpening.

Perhaps because of his training each day, he could feel the mana in his body circulating as he wished, and because his physical ability had weakened since becoming a human, through the circulation of mana, he could feel himself getting closer a step at a time to his old self.

Passing his days like that, he recalled a number of things.

Most of them were memories of his time as a demon king.

The final battle with the hero.

He remembered the many techniques the hero had shown him, refined enough that even the demon king had had a tough battle.

Lately he had been thinking of recreating(/reproducing) those techniques, and though he found that he still couldn't do it, it was a good way to kill time.

And like that, after reviewing his techniques from when he was a demon king, and swinging his wooden sword(practising) so as to usurp the techniques that the hero had used in his memories, he would end.

By the time he had finished all of his practice, the sun would usually set,

and he'd carry home the empty lunchbox that his mother had prepared for him. Such was his daily routine.

Normally the village women would finish doing the daily things they needed to, like working the fields, and would be chatting with each other for example, and the smell of cooking dinner would waft about.

However, that day was different, and Luru noticed the village being more flurried than usual.

The women wore uneasy expressions, and the men were busiedly running about.

Wondering what was going on, Luru asked one of the village girls he was acquainted with.

"Did something happen? Every seems oddly unsettled."

When he did, she replied with discomfiture visible in her expression.

"That's… It seems that Rusty and the rest aren't here. Even though they searched for them, they can't find them!"

Were it just that much, it would be just be something common so it didn't seem like it would be enough to fluster them so much, or so Luru thought, but it seems that it wasn't so simple an issue.

The village girl continued.

“If they were just somewhere in the village it’d be fine but… I mean, look, those kids, and Rusty in particular admried adventurers, right? That’s why, the adventurers from yesterday, umm…? [(What were their names again?)]”

“Gran and Yuumis?”

“Right. We were wondering if perhaps Rusty and the others followed after them…”

The first thing he thought of when he heard that was though Gran and Yuumis were certainly quite the oddballs and carefree, he didn’t think they were the type to bring children to dangerous places.

And the villagers should have understood that as well, after speaking with them yesterday.

But what she was worried about was probably something completely different.

That is, the concern that they hadn’t been taken along by Gran, but had tailed Gran of their own accord.

When Luru suggested this, she agreed with him and said with a nod,

“Right! That’s exactly right! That’s why everyone is worried… It’d be great if they were actually in the village and we were worried for nothing but… Ahh[Ohhh], talking like this just makes me more worried. I’ll go help search!”

Saying so, she ran off to search for them.

Luru considered things.

It was natural to search for them, and he had to as well.

But where should he begin with?

Since the villages were searching inside the village he thought that he should search in the forest, but the forest was wide.

Just where on earth should he begin?

However, yesterday Gran and Yuumis had mentioned the ruin.

Luru remembered the men of the village telling them the location.

Being the case, if they had followed after Gran and Yuumis, then they'd have headed towards the ruin.

Having come up with a plan for now, Luru headed to the village entrance.

When he did, he saw somebody running towards the village.

Looking carefully, he found it was somebody he knew.

A woman with long ears, beautiful skin, and a slender body.

She was the elven woman, named…

"Yuumis!"

"…You're, Luru-kun!? Why are you here?"

Having run up to Luru, though Yuumis looked a little surprised to see him, her expression immediately stiffened and she said,

“Stand back a little! I’m going to place a barrier around the village, okay!?”

“A barrier? Why?”

“I’m kind of lacking time, so be quiet for a moment… 『O pure spirits of the forest… Lend me your power. With my mana as recompense, create a wall that separates the inside from the outside』”

Yuumis had already begun chanting without delay.

Her chant was very familiar to Luru’s ears, formed from the proper grammar and syntax that he was used to, but right now wasn’t the time to think about that.

What was the bgiger issue was that Rusty, Mii and Yuuri were in the forest.

Yuumis said that she was spreading a barrier.

Though he didn’t know why she was doing so, the spell she was chanting was for a barrier of absolute separation.

In other words, if she finished chanting this, he wouldn’t be able to leave the village.

Luru intended to search for them in the forest, and if he couldn’t do it himself then he was going to have the adults in the village do it, so letting Yuumis do this would be extremely troubling for him.

Thus, Luru said,

“Please wait a bit! Rusty, Mii and Yuuri are missing right now!”

“What was that!?”

For a moment, Yuumis’ chanting was interrupted.

Luru replied.

“We can’t find them! They probably aren’t in the village. Everyone is wondering if they went into the forest! That’s why I have to go find them! Please wait!”

Yuumis’ eyes widened in shock.

With this, Yuumis will definitely stop her magic, thought Luru.

However after thinking for a moment, what left Yuumis’ mouth was unexpected.

“…I’m sorry. I can’t stop. 『…Mysterious Wall{Arcanuma Wall}!』”

And like that, Yuumis completed her spell.

The mana she released spread across the entire village, and separated the inside of the village from the outside with a transparent barrier.

Spreading even into the sky, the hemispherical barrier probably blanketed almost all of the village.

The extremely large scale magic wall would probably protect the village from whatever invaders came.

And it also meant that the villages wouldn’t be able to leave the village

either.

“Why!?”

Shouted Luru.

Yuumis looked apologetic, but gave a resolute reply.

“To protect the villagers… Please understand.”

“As in, why do they need to be protected…”

“Yesterday we mentioned the ruins, right? Today, Gran and I had entered there, but there weren’t any new discoveries to speak of. That’s why we left the ruins and were going to head back to the village… but immediately afterwards, the mural on the ruins started to glow, you see. A part of the wall started to crumble. And from there appeared a type of Magus Machine that we’ve never seen before…”

The term ‘Magus Machine’ referred to a mana-powered device that was either difficult, or impossible to produce with modern techniques. Normal devices that used mana were called ‘Magus Tools’.

Magus machines were primarily excavated from ruins, and the manufactured ones required great funds and techniques, but to find such things in a ruin near a backwater village like this…?

Luru tilted his head [in confusion].

Also the fact that the Magus Machines suddenly started operating was also extremely bizarre.

Yuumis continued.

“Right now Gran is fighting with those Magus Machines. I was going to do so as well, but as it turned out a few of them started flying into the air, you see. They weren’t really flying all that fast, but they managed to escape… They were headed towards the village. In terms of power, they weren’t really that big of a threat so I left those up Gran and headed here to protect the village… Look. Speak of the devil.”

Yuumis looked up into the sky.

When she did, she found Magus Machines flying about with their whirling propellers.

They weren’t all that big.

They were a little larger than a child, and smaller than an adult man, so they didn’t look that dangerous.

Built looking like large wasps with their wings plucked off, and a propeller stuck to their head.

Their leg portions were hollowed cylinders, and all of them were headed towards the village.

“…? I wonder what those cylinders are?”

Yuumis tilted her head to the side.

However, Luru knew what they were.

They were Magic Cannons{Magia Cannon}, a magic weapon produced during the war between the demons and humans.

Weapons that were invented so that even people without mana could use them.

He knew from a book that the only ones that remained in the modern era were the pistol models{Handgun Type} that were produced during

their early days.

However, the ones equipped by the Magus Machines floating before their eyes were larger in diameter, and shouldn't have existed in this era.

From this, Luru understood. That in other words, Yuumis was absolutely correct when she said that she had found an ancient demon ruin.

And what this meant was that the wasp-model Magus Machines floating before them were extremely dangerous.

Magus Machines were fundamentally multi-purpose machines created by the demon race.

Naturally their targets were set as humans, and if left to their own devices, they would continue to attack humans.

The machines that Yuumis said had escaped weren't necessarily just these ones. There was also the possibility that they had flown to nearby villages.

Once he thought of that, it became obvious that he needed to stop them at the root.

If he remembered correctly, in Luru's memory these types of Magus Machines would normally operate within a radii of a base, and you also stopped them from there.

In this case, that base would be none other than the ruin that Yuumis had found.

Luru had no memory of such a base being there, but if it were an extremely small one, it wouldn't be strange if Luru didn't know about it.

At any rate, he needed to immediately head to the ruin.

Thinking this, Luru spoke to Yuumis.

“Yuumis. There’s somewhere that I need to go immediately.”

“Haah?[Whaat?] What you need to do is go home to your mother or something. Leave this up to adventurers like Gran and I… Kya-!”

A huge bang resounded.

It was the attack from the Magia Canons of the wasps floating in the air.

Yuumis had been surprised by the first attack, but it seemed that she immediately understood that it was an attack, and calmly began concentrating on maintaining the barrier.

Fortunately, the barrier Yuumis created certainly seemed to have an effect, and didn’t even budge from the attack.

It seems that the title ‘real adventurer’ wasn’t for sure.

Luru felt relieved at this fact.

It was relief that he could probably leave the village to Yuumis.

That’s why he said,

“I’m worried about Rusty and the others. I can’t just hide in the village[tremble here], you know… Yuumis, I’ll leave the vilalge to you.”

“…No matter what you say, I’m not going to release the barrier, you know? You’re a child. There’s nothing you can do anyway.”

Because it looked like she didn’t want to say it, but felt like she had to,

for an instant Luru wasn't sure how to respond.

However, it was a race against time now.

Luru decided to just to it, and decided to act overbearingly like.

"That's fine. It's not like I need your permission anyway. [I'm just going to do as I like, anyway.]"

Saying so, Luru touched the barrier.

As expected, his hand was stopped by a hard, and cold translucent wall, and he couldn't leave the village.

Seeing this, Yuumis looked at him in pity and said,

"You might not know, but this type of barrier won't let anyone pass without my permission. Of course, that includes you. That's why it's poi-...!?"

However, Yuumis saw something unbelievable.

Luru's hand had completely passed through the barrier that should have stopped everything.

"W-, why!? What's going on!? I didn't give you permission..."

To the panicking Yuumis, Luru apologetically said,

"Sorry. I overwrote your magic sequence. With this, your barrier is mine. ...I was a little worried about its strength, so I reinforced it. I'll be leaving the mana to you, Yuumis. With your mana, you'll be able to last a whole day, right?"

“Overwrote the sequence!? There’s no way that you could do that! Not only that, but for one of my magic sequences to…”

Perhaps because she couldn’t believe what had happened, her hand touched the barrier as she tried to leave it.

Unfortunately, however, the barrier wouldn’t let her out.

It was natural. The barrier was already under Luru’s control.

No matter who they were, those on the inside wouldn’t be able to leave.

“Why can’t I pass through!? It’s my barrier!”

Even when she struck the barrier, there was no response at all.

And beyond it, stood Luru.

Trying to bring Luru back somehow, her face was stuck to the barrier as she continued to strike it.

But it was to no avail.

“Whyy!? Whyyyyy!?”

Seeing Yuumis who had already been reduced to a comedy skit, Luru stifled a laugh, and said to her,

“Sorry, Yuumis. I’m going to go search for Rusty and the others. I’ll stop the Magus Machines too.”

“Stop right thereee! Heeeyy!”

Screamed Yuumis, her face still plastered to the barrier.

However, Luru didn't listen to her order.

At this rate, not just his friends, but the village would be in danger too.

Thinking this, Luru ran mana through his body.

His physical capabilities rose, and Luru ran from the village at a speed beyond humans.

Seeing this, Yuumis slid down the barrier to the floor, and said just a few words.

"...What the heck is that kid...?"

/Chapter 5 END

First of all, Yuumis is the type that speaks ‘kashira’s and ends with a lot of ‘wa’s. So I guess you could say she’s fairly elf-ey. Ah, but she’s also not particularly polite. Not really sure how I should do this.

For spells, technology and the like, usually it will have some kanji for the meaning, and the stuff in the {} is how it’s pronounced.

Arcanuma Wall is probably ‘mysterious wall’ in another, fictitious language. Also note that the ‘meaning‘ section of the spell name would have been read ‘Shimpi no Kabe‘, so the ‘Wall‘ part in ‘Arcanuma Wall‘ is plenty foreign enough for them[Japanese].

Also unsure if I should leave all instances of 魔導 as ‘magus’. I’ve read 200+ chapters up to the very latest chapter, and am still unsure as to whether there’s a significance in the fact that they use ‘魔導’ or not. As a word, it’s just another way of saying ‘magic’, but in this series there might be some significance.

Ahh, and I’m still very bothered about the 魔法使い、魔術師 and 魔導師 business. Geez…

Chapter 6 – Giants *

Luru slipped between the trees, speeding through the forest.

His reinforced physical abilities given to him through the circulation of mana granted him speed on par with a wolf running through the forest.

The darkness-coloured mana light that shone by his legs were as beautiful as they were in his days as the demon king.

The animals and monsters in the forest couldn't ignore Luru, the intruder to the forest.

Each time Luru went by, the ears of the animals around him would twitch, and they would turn towards him.

However, they couldn't deal with Luru's overwhelming speed and in the end Luru left them behind.

Like that, Luru headed towards the ruin mentioned by Gran and Yuumis.

Even within the forest near the village it was at a comparatively deep location, and was a ruin whose detailed location was known by basically only the hunters of the village.

As for knowledge of its existence however, it was quite famous amongst those that entered the forest, and in fact all the villages knew of it.

Normally he would have asked in detail about the location before heading there, but right now it was a race against time.

He didn't have the time to do something like that.

Fortunately, he had mostly heard about the direction of the ruins from Gran and Yuumis' conversations yesterday, and to begin with Luru's detection capabilities had been raised due to mana.

Thanks to that, he continued forward, having caught small clues about Gran, Yuumis, Rusty, Mii and Yuuri, like their mana, their presences, and their scents.

Luru's legs didn't stop.

They were his first human friends since he had been reborn.

There was no way that he would let them lose their lives.

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Whether it was good luck or bad luck, close by the ruins that Luru finally arrived at were not just Gran, but Rusty and Mii, and to his shock, Yuuri as well.

Looking carefully, you could see that Rusty and the others were embracing each other, terrified, and trembling enough that words wouldn't come out.

"Why the hell are you here!? What happened with Yuumis!?"

Angrily yelled Gran.

With his greatsword in a guard, he was standing in front of them, protecting them.

His muscular back felt reliable, and he gave off an intensity that felt like he could protect them from anything.

However, even he may have had opponents that he was disadvantaged against, and it seemed that such an opponent was before him.

It was no surprise that Rusty and the others were trembling, for what

stood before Gran were a number of those Magus Machines that were hardly ever seen in this era, and were looking at Gran with their inorganic, glowing red eyes.

"I came to save you! Yuumis is maintaining a barrier over the village!"

Said Luru, arriving at Gran's side.

Looking at Luru suspiciously, he replied,

"Haah!? The hell did you say!? Of course that's impossible! It's too late for me to say anything now that you're already here, but... You too! Hide behind me, damnit!"

While speaking, Gran turned his greatsword to the Magus Machines.

Were they in the heat of battle, he might not have had the leisure to speak like this.

But mysteriously, the Magus Machines didn't seem to move, and just continued to stare at them, which is why they could speak like they did.

To explain the design of the Magus Machines in a word, it would be 'giant', and they were mostly humanoid, with a thick and large body.

Their hands were armed with swords or axes and such, and given their giant size, could easily turn a person into a lump of meat.

The size of the giants were perhaps 3 metres.

They were almost all made of stone, and looked incredibly hard, and troublesome to deal with.

The area that corresponded to a face had nothing but a single eye that shone red.

Based on all of these traits, Luru guessed that they were the Magus Machine that were massed produced in the early days of the way, the “Stone Giants{Lupes Gigantes}”.

If he remembered correctly, their physical abilities were not all too high, and they were simply constructed Magus Machines.

However, because of that their mass construction was simple, and because they were also difficult to break, they were often used in the public works[Note: public engineering etc.].

The castle that Luru used to live in were also created by a large number of these Lupes Gigantes, so he felt deeply moved somehow.

Though Luru took up a stance against the Lupes Gigantes, he began thinking about the reason why they weren’t attacking.

Though they were used for tasks in public works, it wasn’t uncommon that they were used for battle during emergencies, and during the end days of the human-demon war, almost all of the Lupes Gigantes were converted for battle use.

Accordingly, their attack targets should have been set to humans, but then the fact that they weren’t attacking right now meant that they were assigned some other task.

The wasp-model Magus Machines that had escaped Yuumis, the “Magic Cannon Wasps{Cannon Apis}” had clearly been set to attack humans, though. Just what did this mean…?

He felt that there was some principle behind their actions.

Whilst thinking this, Luru said to Gran,

“I’ll be fine, so you protect Rusty and the others.”

“Like I said, there’s no way I’d bloody accept that! I don’t wanna to be the one to have to explain to your parents when something happens to you! To begin with, this happened because of Yuumis and I. Just obediently let me protect you!”

Replied Gran, almost shouting.

He probably felt a sense of responsibility for it, thinking that this kind of thing happened because the two of them had entered the ruins carelessly.

Because of that, he didn’t want any casualties.

It was easy to understand.

But Luru decided not to reply to Gran’s entreaty, and took a step towards the Lupes Gigantes.

Wondering how close he would need to be before the Magus Machines acted, he stepped forward to find out.

“Oi!”

Gran yelled even more, but because Rusty and the others were behind him, he couldn’t move from there.

They didn’t know when the Lupes Gigantes might attack.

Because of that, despite the fact that the Lupes Gigantes weren’t moving, he was forced to stay there.

Normally Yuumis would have come back after setting up a barrier, but because Luru had come here for some reason, Gran had lost his other

avenues of action.

Seeing what Luru was doing, as expected Rusty couldn't bear seeing his childhood friend endanger himself, so whilst trembling, he screamed,

"Luru! He said to stop it!"

However, had this been enough to stop Luru, he wouldn't have done something like this to begin with.

In the first place, the reason Luru did what he did was because he was the only one that knew how to stop the Magus Machines.

Even if he told Gran how these Magus Machines could be stopped, there was nothing that could be done if Gran wasn't familiar with the control mechanisms in the ruin.

Because of that, it wasn't a method that could be finished quickly, and so there was no way Luru could leave it to Gran.

That's why despite knowing that his words were nothing but consolation, Luru said,

"It's fine, so you guys just let Gran protect you! I… have to deal with these guys."

He neared the Magus Machines.

He didn't know where the boundary [beyond which they would attack] was, but most of the thus far unmoving Lupes Gigantes had their eyes on Luru, and then attacked him.

Are they the type that attack after you enter a certain distance?

Having recognised this, Luru took a distance from them temporarily,

and fell back until they stopped attacking.

Of course there was also the chance that they would continue chasing him forever, but the reality was not like that.

As for how far that was, after drawing near and retreating over and over, he realised that it was calculated by distance from the ruins, rather than distance from the pursuing Lupes Gigantes.

Watching that dangerous looking behaviour from behind, Gran also seemed to have come to the same understanding, and relaxed his guard.

"...Seems that they won't attack unless you get close to the ruins, huh..."

"Yeah. But the wasp model Magus Machines that flew to the village will just attack you no matter what. These ones and those ones probably have a different objective."

Luru replied to Gran.

Gran tilted his head to the side, and said,

"Objective?"

"You can already guess, right? These rock giants are obviously protecting the ruins. It's natural to think that those wasps are the same."

"Then why'd they leave here?"

"Isn't it because those wasps have a greater range of surveillance than these giants?"

“Ahh… I see. I guess I’ll accept that idea for now. But then there’s still an issue; why are they protecting this place?”

That was certainly a good question.

Luru didn’t know of this ruin.

From the appearance of the ruin, it was a small, round and flat building[Note: think a short cylinder], and though Luru was a bit far from it, he could see a staircase a little from the entrance.

There were a bunch of piled rocks near the stairs, so the stairs probably weren’t normally exposed[and were normally hidden].

The stairs seemed to lead downwards, so you could tell that they headed underground, but Luru had no memory of such a building.

He didn’t know the purpose of the building either, and had no memory of a place guarded by Lupes Gigantes and Cannon Apis during the war.

That meant that this place was necessarily built after Luru’s death as the demon king, but he couldn’t imagine a reason why they would build such a thing.

Could the ancient demon race have survived longer than he had expected?

It couldn’t be helped that he was concerned about what was inside the ruins.

That’s why Luru spoke.

“I’m going to go into the ruin, and search for…”

However, Gran immediately rejected it.

“Oi. That’s no good. I won’t allow it.”

His words were natural.

It was the job of adults to stop children from doing reckless things.

His words were extremely natural.

However, Luru should have been more correct from a logical point of view.

“Things will get dangerous if we don’t hurry up, you know. A bunch of wasp model Magus Machines escaped, right?”

Right. As long as they didn’t know the range in which they were active, deactivating them quickly was a priority.

They had no hints about how to do so, and so there was probably no mistake that there would be something in the ruins, meaning that they needed to hurry up and investigate inside. His argument was sound.

“That may be true but… To begin with, you’re a kid. Do you get it? Do you have enough power to fight? You don’t, right?”

However, though Luru’s argument may have been natural, to Gran, Luru was definitely just a kid.

There was no way that a kid would be able to do something like that, and he argued that there was no way he could let a kid do something dangerous.

Though Luru managed to discover the Lupes Gigantes’ range of action, in the end it was nothing but that approaching and retreating, so it looked like nothing more than an extended game of tag.

In truth, that was basically all he did.

To Gran, Luru was nothing more than a child with fast legs.

And because Luru understood this quite well, he didn't think that they would get anywhere with just conversation.

That's why Luru spoke.

"In other words, you'll accept it if I have enough power, right?"

"Well, frankly speaking, yeah, but…"

"Then just watch me."

"Huh…? …O-, Oi! Stop it, idiot!"

And without time for Gran to stop him, Luru headed towards the Lupes Gigantes.

He then shrouded his fist in mana and attacked the Lupes Gigantes.

From Gran's point of view, it was an unbelievable action.

A seven year old child attacked the three metre giant of rock with his bare hands.

However you thought about it, it was nothing more than an act of suicide.

However, what was even more unbelievable to Gran was that the one hit Luru threw at the rock giant's chest had smashed it into tiny pieces of rock.

Without even stopping, Luru continued towards the next Lupes Gigantes and continued to crush them one by one.

"Oi, oi… What the hell is that kid!?"

That was all Gran thought.

"Amazing…"

"So Luru was actually this strong…"

"It's unbelievable…"

The shocked voices of Rusty, Mii and Yuuri could be heard.

Each time Luru swung his fist, the Lupes Gigantes would be reduced to rubble.

Luru's small figure that danced about, struck and kicked the giants and leaving them as just bundles of rock looked almost like he was playing.

Despite doing all that, he was still taking it easy.

That was what Gran could feel from him.

And then, by the time they had noticed, the Lupes Giantes around them were all turned to scrap rock, and not a single one remained functional.

Having done all that, Luru turned to Gran and spoke.

“I wonder if there’s any problem with my power.”

“…No. Since you’ve done this much, I can’t say a thing.”

“Then you don’t mind if I enter?”

Having said that, Luru stared at Gran.

Gran sighed, and replied,

“I got it… But yanno, these ruins have turned into a pretty big find. You can tell from the Magus Machines just now, right? That’s why it seems like it’ll be annoying in the future if you go in alone.”

“Meaning…?”

“I want you to go with Yuumis and I. But the wasp Magus Machines are a problem. So if possible, I want you to head back temporarily if you find a way to stop them. Then if the ruins continue beyond that, wait for us before you go in, or head back to the village for a little. I don’t want you going in too far. Also I suppose I may as well say this while we’re at it, but I’ve also heard in cases where Magic Dolls{Golems} in ruins aren’t being controlled by someone directly, they’re being controlled by some equipment left in there. Considering that these Magus Machines are moving together towards the same goal, they’re probably of the type that I just mentioned. In these cases, if you mess about with the controls, or you break them, it seems the Golems will stop. That’s why if you find one, destroy it. After that, wait there. If not, then wait somewhere not too far in for us. Those are my minimum conditions. If you accept, then I’ll bring these guys back to the village. …You fine with that?”

Gran looked at Rusty, and said that.

To Luru, as long as he could stop the Magus Machines, he would be happy for now, so he nodded.

If possible, he wanted to search every inch of the ancient demon ruin for clues, but whining about it now would be annoying, so he didn't.

"Got it. I'm fine with that. …Well then, I'll leave Rusty and the rest to you. …Rusty, Mii, Yuuri – be careful heading back, alright?"

When he said that, the three of them obediently said,

"Yeah! You be careful too! I mean… I get that I can't go in with you, after all."

"Rusty is being obedient for once… Luru. Don't try to do anything that you can't, okay? But I know that you won't do anything reckless like Rusty, so you might be fine even if I didn't say this."

"Sorry about this, Luru. I tried to stop Rusty and Mii but… in the end I just made trouble for you all the same. I'll show you my gratitude later."

Saying that, they followed Gran and headed towards the village.

Luru once again gazed at the ruin.

They weren't built of anything strange.

It didn't look very different from the buildings he had often seen as a demon king.

It seemed that there was no mistaking that this wasn't built too long after his defeat at the hands of the hero.

"...It'd be nice if there weren't any traps. Wait, or perhaps the Magus Machines were the trap..."

Like that, Luru headed into the ruins.

Lupes Gigantes: Luu Pehs Gi Gans Tes

Was a bit liberal with 'その方法をグランたちに教えたところで、遺跡の中にあるだろう中央装置の扱いを知らなければどうしようもない。'

Haaaah!? is a type of scoffing 'whaat!?' sound. I don't just write 'what' because 'what' lacks the scoffy-ness, and 'haaah' is close enough to someone going 'huuuuh!?' in the same circumstances.

/Chapter 6 END

Chapter 7 – The Sleeping Maiden ∗

"…And with this, I'm done."

In one of the rooms in the ruin, whilst reading the various information projected on a giant screen, he finished what he was doing after only a few minutes.

After Gran had left and Luru had gone into the ruins to have a look, though the exterior had been worn down, he found that the insides were quite splendid you could say, and had been broken in few places, and with its facilities almost all in working condition.

Thanks to the demon race's prided magic installations, the system was still taking care of the maintainance of this facility, and this Magus Machine was one of the terminals of the maintainance system. Since Luru could send signals from the central installation, he was relieved at being able to shut down the Magus Machines outside.

With this, he no longer had anything in particular to do so he could have just returned to the village, but Luru felt the desire to know every corner of this ruin.

The central installation had been located not very far from the stairs, but it seemed that it maintained the entirety of the ruin and there was a map still in there.

Because of that, Luru understood that he had was still just at the entrance to the facility.

In other words, the ruin still continued further in, and it seemed that the possibility of there being clues on the ancient demon race was high.

Since he was already here, he wondered if there was any information in this room about what happened after he had died as the demon king, but found that there was nothing aside from things related to the installation, and even that was of the bare minimum level.

It was as though they were trying to hide something.

The level of difficulty in finding information was enough to make him feel as such.

It might have been lucky that he had managed to shut down the Magus Machines this quickly.

Having said that though, after considerign that it was because of this that this facility had managed to remain after all this time even after the humans defeated the demons, Luru held complicated feelings about it.

Regarding the Magus Machines, when he shut them down he had a check to see what their objectives were. The Lupes Gigantes had been tasked with the maintainance of the exposed above-ground areas, and the Cannon Apis had been charged with keeping surveillance of the surrounding areas.

While they did so, if they discovered anything abnormal, they would eliminate them if they approached within a certain range.

It seemed that Luru was correct about the Cannon Apis and Lupes Gigantes having different range of surveillances, and unlike the Cannon Apis that had attacked as far as the village, the Lupes Gigantes didn't move beyond 10 metres from the ruin.

Because of the technological strength of the ancient demon race, the exposed above-ground portions were durable even with the passage of time, but having said that, they wouldn't be fine for eternity.

Maintainance would be required once every few hundred years, and because of some bad luck, or perhaps you could say good luck, Gran and Yuumis had stumbled upon that exact maintainance day by coincidence.

It seems that after the Lupes Gigantes completed their maintainance of the broken walls above ground, they were going to seal up the entrance to the underground portions of the ruin with a new, airtight wall, so this time had truly been a coincidence.

Including the fact that Luru, a former demon king, was here, he felt that it was hard to say if Gran and Yuumis had good luck or bad luck, but perhaps 'coincidence' is actually something like that, thought Luru as he waited for them with a smile.

As for the other things that he came to understand from searching the central installation room, it was that this place wasn't built for the sake of the war against humans, but was to house some kind of long-term preservation device, and to preserve its functionality.

Unfortunately he didn't know what was being preserved, but whether because of some flaw of the central installation, or perhaps as design, he couldn't find out even when he searched for it.

However, since he had this map he knew precisely where it would be, and once Gran and Yuumis came, he could just find out himself.

In truth he wanted to go look now, but a promise was a promise.

Breaking it would just give him a guilty conscious, and though he was aware that he wouldn't be punished or anything, Gran had shown his good will through his words, and Luru felt somewhat hesistant to betray that good will of his.

That's why Luru waited.

He would wait until Gran had delivered Rusty and the others to the village, and returned with Yuumis.

◆◇◆◇◆

-Clunk, Clunk-

In the room packed with mage devices created by the ancient demon race, sat Luru, hugging his knees while he waited for Gran.

While he did, he heard echoes resound through the inside of the ruins.

When he listened carefully, he realised that they were the sound of somebody's footseps.

And as for whose footsteps they were, that was extremely easy to conclude.

You couldn't easily find people who would come to places like this, meaning that it was none other than Gran who had left Rusty, Mii and Yuuris at the village.

And truly, a burly swordsman appeared in the room after a short while; it was Gran.

Luru felt a little better having seen Gran head towards him with a hearty smile.

Being alone in a ruin created by his comrades long ago with nobody left in in was surprisingly lonely, and painful.

When Gran returned, he felt something warm return inside him.

His blood was finally moving again.

Gran's smile clouded over a little when he saw Luru's haggard expression.

"...Oi, you alright?"

He asked.

Luru smiled, and replied,

"I'm fine... It seems that the inside of the ruin is cold, that's all."

Now that it was mentioned, Gran surveyed the surroundings once more, and patted his body, seemingly noticing it.

"It really is cold, huh... Well, it's underground after all. Not cold enough to catch a cold, though."

"Yeah. ...Well then, shall we start exploring?"

"Ahh... It feels kinda weird to have you taking charge, Luru."

"Isn't that fine? I'm the one who stopped the Magus Machines... They stopped, right?"

As though thinking back on it, Gran nodded and replied.

“Ohh, you’re right, you’re right. All of the wasp model Magus Machines that attacked the village stopped at once. Good job! They were smashed to pieces on the ground… Yuumis looked a bit like she was gunna cry. She was saying ‘Precious legacies of the past are…!’ or something like that.”

Spoke Gran, a little jokingly.

It looked like he was picturing Yuumis’ dramatic show of sorrow.

“It isn’t like they can’t be used for research even if they’re broken a little, right?”

“Well, that’s right, but she wanted some that were in a more perfect shape, yanno.”

“I get how she feels, but… it’s too late to do anything about that now, right? If we search the ruins, we might find some more Magus Machines like that. Ahh, speaking of which, where’s Yuumis? Didn’t she come together with you?”

When Luru asked this, Gran frowned and spoke accusingly.

“Oi, oi, did you forget what it was you did?”

“Eh?”

“Didn’t you fiddle with the barrier around the village so that Yuumis couldn’t come out? Yuumis was crying and screaming, ‘I can’t get out! I can’t get out!’ yanno. Despite that, the kids seemed to go in just fine,

though.”

Now that it was mentioned,

‘Come to think of it, something like that did happen, huh.’

he remembered.

‘But in that case, why wasn’t Gran locked in as well?’, he wondered.

If he remembered correctly, he set it so that Rusty, Mii, Yuuri, and Gran would be able to enter it.

And so that nobody would be able to leave.

But despite that, Gran was here right now.

When Luru asked about this, Gran replied,

“Before I entered the barrier, Yuumis screamed at me. ‘Don’t enter the barrier’, she said. It was a pretty close call.”

“Ahh… Well that makes sense. So Yuumis is still inside the barrier, huh? Couldn’t she have just rewritten the magic sequence again?”

Muttered Luru.

When he did, Gran tilted his head to the side, and said,

“You say it like its easy, but don’t you know just how hard rewriting magic sequences is? It’d be a different story if you had a huge amount of mana, but yanno, if magicians got their magic sequences rewritten by others that easily, they’d be useless. Even a competent magician needs at least a few dozen minutes, yanno.”

“But I thought it’d already been a few dozen minutes.”

“Yuumis’ magic sequence was an original of hers. To begin with it was made so that it’d be hard to rewrite, and since it was overwritten with an even more high level sequence, Yuumis said she didn’t know how to rewrite it anymore. I might be average when it comes to magic sequences, but Yuumis is a first-rate magician, you know? And for her barrier to be…”

Since the barrier Yuumis used was quite high level, Luru thought that with time she would be able to rewrite it again, but it seems that things weren’t so simple.

Perhaps the technique he used was something that was lost over these past millenia.

Since the technique of rewriting was something that required a slightly different mode of thought than simply using magecraft, Luru felt that he could understand how things ended up this way.

“Well, as for Yuumis it’ll be fine if we release the barrier when we get back. Gran, there’s no use just standing here. We can talk while we walk. Let’s move.”

Gran tilted his head at Luru’s words, and voiced his doubts.

“…It’s weird. Are you really seven? It feels like I’m talking to someone older than me.”

In truth, if you included his years as the demon king, Luru was undoubtedly the elder so Gran’s feeling was correct.

But the reality was that Luru was no older than seven years old.

Gran might have felt something like ‘Why is this brat speaking so importantly?’. [Note: In Japanese, younger people are typically of lower station, hence use polite speech. But Luru has been speaking as an equal, and his last line was kind of imperative.]

Because of that, Luru obediently apologised.

“Really? My bad. I’ll take care.”[Note: Still not using polite speech]

However the apology itself sounded somewhat wrong.

Gran frowned even more, and then looking like he had given up, said,

“… Like I said… Well, whatever. Let’s go.”

And like that, Luru and Gran began to walk.

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The insides of the ruin were surprisingly bright, and not much moisture could be felt in the atmosphere.

The ceiling of the ruin itself glowed softly, and the floor was stable and sound.

While gazing at the equipment in the ruin, Gran let out a voice of admiration.

“This is amazing… I can understand why Yuumis gets so into this stuff now.”

“What do you mean?”

“Well… This light included, aren’t there a whole bunch of Magus Machines installed here? With this level of technology, succesfully analysing just one of these things would make life a lot more convenient!”

“”You can’t find this stuff in large towns?”

Luru hardly ever left his village and when he did, he had only gone to the neighbouring town at best, so he still hadn’t ever set foor in a large city.

Because of that, he wasn’t well versed in the level of technology in cultural capitals, and thought to ask Gran to find out.

“Well… It’s not like there’s not, but there aren’t many people who could fill up a whole building like this one. Not only that, the mana consumption isn’t a joke and hardly any of them can be used for long periods of time. But it seems this ruin is different. Anyway, thousands of years have passed at the least, but they’re functioning even now… I dunno how they’re built, but they’re pretty amazing tools huh…”

From these words, Luru was able to guess that the level of technology circulating in this era was quite primitive.

His father Patrick had a few Magic Tools, but according to his father, the capital had more of them to an extent, but it seemed that they couldn’t mass produce so many that you’d find them in just any old marketplace.

Though it was said that a portion of the Magus Machines had been

reproduced, or so Luru had learned from the books in his home, it really was just a portion, and they probably couldn't be found that often on the market.

He wouldn't say that all Magus Machines outdid Magic Tools, but it was clear nonetheless that this ruin was filled with a great many convenient things.

Their consumption of mana was different too, so if they had to try and manufacture a great deal of one, the Magus Machines would be better.

Luru had considered one day creating some Magus Machines and selling them on the market, but going by the trend of the information, it seemed that doing so would just create troubles for him.

Of course he couldn't make a final decision based just on his chats with his father and Gran, but he was thinking that perhaps it would be better not to do so.

There were a few Magus Machines in the passageway, but they didn't attack Luru and Gran.

It was because Luru had set them as such when he had come into contact with the central installation.

He had assigned them all to maintainance duties, so they were completely indifferent to Luru and Gran who were doing nothing but walking about.

It seems that Gran just couldn't get used to it, and each time a Magus Machine went past, he would prepare his greatsword in caution, but Luru was smoothly walking forward without a trace of tension.

Watching Luru act like that, Gran spoke.

"...I really can't tell if it's bravery or recklessness."

Luru just knew that it was neither.

The Magus Machines would just act according to settings.

And right now, those settings had been set to no attacks.

That's why the two of them were safe.

That was all it was.

However, he couldn't very likely explain this to Gran, nor would Gran likely understand it even if Luru did.

Since Luru understood this, he just smiled without a reply, and continued further into the ruins.

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"Is this as far as it goes?"

Having travelled to the end of the straight path, Gran stopped his feet and voiced that question.

In front of his eyes was a massive double door that overlooked the two of them oppressively.

It was perhaps made of... metal?

No aging could be seen on the smooth silver doors, and considering that it had withstood such a long period of time, its durability could probably said to be very high.

Touching and pushing on it to investigate but finding that it wouldn't

open, Gran seemed to shake his head in acceptance, and turned to Luru to speak.

"It's no good. This thing won't open."

"It's a door, so there's no way that it shouldn't open, but..."

Being told that, Gran stopped to think for a little, before saying,

"I heard this from Yuumis, but in a lot of ruins there are doors that won't open unless you fulfil some kind of requirements. This is probably one of those types too... It probably won't open unless we fiddle with the equipment in that first room you were in, right? ...Wanna head back?"

So proposed Gran.

Certainly there was a chance that it would open if they returned there.

But Luru had investigated the central installation to his limits just a while ago, and didn't find that sort of function.

However, he had told Gran that he had just randomly fiddled with it, so he couldn't explain the controls in too much details either.

His story was that he had just coincidentally managed to stop the Magus Machines.

"Nah, it'd be a pain to head there and back. There's no saying that it'll open once we head back there. Shouldn't we look around for a bit more?"

Gran who thought about Luru's proposal for a little while suddenly seemed to gasp a little, and then said,

“Well yeah, but… how about I try chopping it down?”

Though it wasn’t anything like ‘a flash of inspiration’, Luru did think that it was a simple method with promise.

Moreover, if it didn’t work, then it didn’t work.

“…That might be good too. Gran, mind giving it a go?”

“Aye.”

With that, Gran began to refine the mana that was set up in his greatsword.

It looked like he was simply swinging his sword, but perhaps because he was a first rate adventurer, it possessed considerable might.

Enough that you’d start to think that maybe he really could chop the doors down.

“Uoraaaaaaaaa!”

And so with a shout, the running Gran swung his sword downwards.

The greatsword had certainly headed towards the doors, and the blade had come into contact with them.

However,

—GAKIIN!—

The sound of metal on metal, together with flying sparks.

"…No use, huh."

Said the dejected Gran.

He touched the place his sword had cut, but,

"…Not a single scratch. I'm seriously gunna lose my confidence…"

From Luru's perspective it was also quite a powerful blow, but this probably meant that the doors' durability had won.

They were probably created with the demon race's highest class techniques.

With this, they had no choice but to challenge it fair-and-square, but returning to the central installation was useless too.

Just what could they do…?

Luru neared the doors, and tried touching the edges of those silver doors.

When he did, mysteriously, they could hear a voice.

It was something he had often heard in the past from Magus Machines; the sound of an artificial voice.

It resounded, with some parts of it a little blurred.

『……Mana……wavelength……confirmed……searchi……Match……100th……n King Luruslia Nord……rights……Release……the first……Great……Lock?』

There were many parts with crackling noise mixed in, but mixed in were worsd that he couldn't ignore.

However, right now that wasn't the issue.

It seemed that Gran had also heard it;

"...Is it saying that it'll open up?"

he muttered, whilst he stared up at the ceiling.

It wasn't as though the voice was coming from the ceiling, but he ended up looking at the ceiling since he couldn't tell where it did come from.

As Gran said, the artificial voice was probably asking if it should open the door.

Moreover, it had called out Luru's name as the demon king.

It had recognised Luru as the demon king himself.

Though Luru had certainly also wondered what was going on, considering that he was a human now, he determined that what he needed to do now was answer the voice, so he shouted,

"Open it!"

Since it had asked if they wanted to open it, just those few words should have sufficed.

As expected, it seemed that they had heard it, and the artificial voice replied just,

『.....Understood.....』

Then, from the large doors in front of them, the sound of a lock turning could be heard, and then even though they hadn't so much as touched the doors, they began creaking open by themselves.

Gran and Luru watched this in shock for a little while, and then when it seemed that the doors had completely opened, —THU-THUMP— it rang, as it stopped moving.

"...It seems the doors have opened, so... shall we head inside?"

With Luru words, Gran nodded in a fluster and replied,

"Y-, yeah... But seriously, this ruin won't stop giving me surprises..."

With that, the two of them headed inside with the clucking of their shoes.

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Beyond the doors was a considerably wide room.

The hemispherical ceiling covered the entire place.

It somehow gave off a solemn atmosphere, and it felt like the room was overflowing with stillness.

And in the centre of the room was a cylinder made of transparent material.

It was probably just large enough to fit a single person in there.

And seeing this, Luru immediately understood.

That was a Capsule.

It was a long term sleeping device created in the past by the demon race.

However, when Luru had died, it still wasn't applicable for practical use yet, but despite this, it was there before Luru's eyes.

Was there somebody inside?

Did one of Luru's comrades from long ago, having crossed over these thousands of years, still sleep there?

Wondering this and feeling a incredible longing for his companions, Luru clumsily rushed over to the Capsule.

So strong was the feeling, that it seemed something would break in him were there nobody there.

So I'm begging you, anybody, please be in there.

I'm begging you.

He thought.

And then, having mustered his resolve, Luru peered inside.

————And what lay there was a single girl, quietly sleeping.

/Chapter 7 END

Chapter 8 – Hour of Awakening *

['When she awoke']

Beyond the clear material of the Capsule slept a young girl without a breath, possessing an almost sculpted looking face, so beautiful that she didn't seem real.

She had silver hair, almost transparent white skin, and fine and slender limbs.

Her age seemed about the same as Luru's right now, and her face was young enough that you could say it was cherubic.

However, none of that mattered.

To Luru, what was important was that she her features conformed with the characteristics of the race now called the ancient demon race.

The extreme mana conductivity of the ancient demon race dyed their hair silver.

That was the most important feature of the ancient demon race.

Humans didn't possess this kind of hair.

It seemed that modern people didn't know about this fact, but of course Luru did.

He knew that this appearance was that of the ancient demon race.

That's why he knew that the girl before him was of the ancient demon race.

And, what was even more important, was that he knew very well who this girl was.

There was no way he could forget.

It was the girl he was worried about during his fight with the hero.

The face that appeared in his mind when he regretted being eternally unable to celebrate her birthday.

The daughter of Bacchus Taesnola who had long ago been the Demon King Luruslia Nord's trusted friend.

"...Iris..."

Muttered Luru.

Gran peered into the Capsule as well from behind Luru, and when he realised that what was laying there was a girl, he raised his voice in shock.

"...Oi, why the hell is there a person in there!? Are they alive?"

With those words, Luru confirmed a second time that as expected, the characteristics of the ancient demon race weren't passed on to the people of this era.

To gran, she was nothing but a human.

In fact, excluding her hair, the girl's – Iris' appearance wasn't different to a human's whatsoever.

You could feel that she had a little bit more mana, but even so, the reason it felt like she was still a human was probably because she had been continuously sleeping for so long.

The long term sleeping system required a lot of mana to operate, so

diminished mana during the sleep was one of the side effects of its use.

When Luru was the demon king, the effect of this was large enough that it couldn't be ignored; enough that if one slept for 100 years, all of their mana would be used up. As a result, it wasn't able to be put to practical use.

Since then, technology had probably progressed, and it had been reformed so you could sleep for even thousands of years without issue.

If it was using just a little bit of the mana within the body, then the ancient demon race could do so without problem at all.

Once their woke up and began moving about, their mana would return to levels befitting of the ancient demon race once feared by the humans, after all.

There were no major problems with the machine outside of that side effect after all, and being case, it meant that Iris was now safely sleeping.

That's why Luru replied,

"I don't know why but… she's alive, isn't she? There's no way to check except by opening it up"

"Even if you talk about opening it up… how are we supposed to open this thing, anyway? I've never seen something like this before. There's someone inside, so I can't bloody well chop it open either."

Gran spoke with a troubled expression.

The transparent Capsule that covered Iris was also made from ancient demon race technology, and not only had it survived thousands of years without a problem, you could imagine that even if you cut at it, it would be fine just like the doors from a while ago.

That being the case, they had no choice but to open it the way they were meant to.

In the doors' case, what seemed to be the management system's artificial voice had spoken when Luru touched it.

What if he touched it as well, this time…?

Thinking this, Luru slowly and quietly brought his hand to the Capsule.

It was a machine that had probably allowed a living being to sleep without dying for many, many years.

Because he was afraid of breaking it by handling it roughly, he had ended up touching it the way he did.

Though he comprehended that it wasn't made of anything so brittle, this was a matter of the heart.

And then, Luru's hand made contact with the Capsule.

And when it did,

『……suspend……long……ing equipment……number……?』

resounded the blurred artificial voice, once more. Thus, Luru replied,

"Please suspend it! With the life of the person using the equipment as priority!"

It would be trouble if all that happened was that the system shut down.

They had to wake make sure she woke up safely.

That's why Luru said what he did.

The artificial intelligence created long ago via mage technology[/arts] had been created with the ability to obey these kinds of vague instructions in mind, so as long as there wasn't some kind of flaw that developed as a result of the few millennia that had passed, it would do as he intended.

And truly, the artificial voice said.

『……Understood……』

and began preparing to suspend the long term sleeping equipment.

Some kind of mist-like medicine or something was being sprayed inside the Capsule before their eyes.

What happened after was that the blood gradually began to return to Iris' pale face.

Her chest that had been completely still up until now began to slowly rise and fall, and you could tell that she had begun to breath.

It was probably to wake her up.

"…Seems she's alive, huh."

Muttered Gran, as he watched over these events.

From his point of view, he probably couldn't understand what on earth this Capsule was.

Even Luru couldn't understand the details of this, even if he knew that Iris was being woken up.

It was unreasonable to expect the people of this era to understand.

How long passed by after that?

It didn't feel like too long had passed, and it also felt like it was just an instant. When that time had passed, a line suddenly appeared down the middle of the capsule, and after that, the Capsule opened, and the two halves of the transparent Capsule were stored in each side.

At last, Iris had awoken.

Thinking this, Luru approached the sleeping Iris with resolve.

Looking at her face up close, Luru felt a profound feeling of nostalgia[/longing].

He recalled the joyful face of his friend who had just had a child.

The many times he had celebrated her birthday.

Iris' smiling face as she ran up to him to be spoiled.

And the happy expressions of her parents who watched this.

All of those revived in him when he saw her face.

Aaah, she was finally waking up.

Even though he had expected her to have died after his fight, she managed to survive safe and sound, and even reunited with he who should have died.

He felt deeply moved by this.

In the past, in the height of the war with the humans, when they resolved themselves to die, soldiers would say to their sweethearts before heading to battle,

『Even if I fall in battle, let's meet again in the next life. The cycle of rebirth will definitely allow us to meet again.』

They were words of faith, of temporary comfort, and of consolation.

They believed in this in the depths of their hearts, but that didn't mean that they truly expected to be able to meet again.

Despite all of this, Luru was now seeing such a miracle.

It was just a little, but he felt that he couldn't believe it.

However, it was reality.

He who had become a human, and the daughter of his old friend, separated by thousands of years, met each other.

This was reality.

Like that, Luru gazed at her face as he stopped his emotions from leaking prematurely.

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And then, the girl opened her eyes.

Slowly, and majestically.

Both Luru and Gran were for an instant entranced by that beautiful sight.

However, it was only for an instant.

The one who noticed first was Gran.

“…!? Luru! That kid is dangerous!! …Guah-!!”

Together with his scream, Gran was sent flying without reason and crashed again the wall.

The shocked Luru returned to his senses, and with eyes wide, he saw that the now awakened and upwards facing Iris had the palm of her right hand pointed towards Gran, with smoke rising from it.

Luru understood that Iris was the one who had sent Gran flying.

“…What are you…!?”

Shouted Luru in panic, but the rising Iris suddenly smiled, her soft gaze became sharp and she glared at Luru.

Her glittering red eyes burned with hatred and anger.

“…Human. Die.”

It was a dark voice, colder than a glacier.

A voice smothered in all despair.

And then, Luru noticed her words.

He hadn't paid any attention, but it was a reality that he was a human, and long ago the demon race and human race had been enemies who killed each other.

It was a reality that to Iris, Luru looked like nothing but an enemy.

His seven years of peace living as a human had made Luru forget his wariness from his time as the demon king.

Iris slowly, but at a speed that was invisible from human standards, moved her arm towards Luru.

It seemed that she had no intention of using a chant.

Gathered mana compressed in an instant in Iris' hand, and she fired it at Luru.

Luru felt shock at her ability to manipulate mana so quickly.

The Iris that Luru had known didn't possess this much power.

She was nothing more than a young child, and not only was her mana in its growth phase, but she was at an age where her magic and magecraft would only develop later on.

Despite this, just now was at the level of a soldier.

Luru didn't know just how much time had passed after he had died.

However, he could tell from her power that she had gone through some considerably harsh training.

The red orb of mana, or Mana Bullet{Magia Globus}, that Iris had fired

off approached Luru's abdomen at a terrifying speed.

'If it hits him, he'll have no choice but to be prepared for death.'

It was magecraft that possessed enough power and speed to make any onlookers believe so.

However, the one who stood there was the reborn Demon King, Luruslia Nord.

Regardless of the heights it may have reached, and regardless of the fact that she was an ancient demon, as long as it hadn't escaped the level of an ordinary soldier, it was impossible to breach his defences.

The Magia Globus that had likely been Iris' surprise attack was softly caught by Luru's palm, and as though it was his own mana, he moulded it into four parts.

And then, he began treating it almost like a bean bag.

While freely manipulating the four spheres of mana, Luru immersed himself in the nostalgic memories of having often done this type of thing during his time as demon king.

As the demon king, he had visited children who had lost their parents to the war and played with them.

Playing included pointless activities, as well as many activities with the goal of improving their combat skills.

There were a number of games that helped children master their control of mana.

There was the game of tag where one would scatter their mana, and you had to find them.

There was the game of throwing Magia Globus at each other like a snowball fight.

There was also turning your mana into a beanbag, and competing to see who could do it manipulate it more freely.

All of these were games devised for skill training, for the sake of protecting the lives of these children in battle,

Luru performing one of these games had made Iris stare at him, eyes wide.

There was no reason humans should know about this game, and even if they did, they wouldn’t be able to learn it like nothing.

It was not only that, either.

Just now, the number of Mana Bullets{Magia Globus} that Luru had on hand, numbered in the dozens.

The original four had gradually been split up, and the number of them gradually increased.

Now, not only were the numbers beyond normal, but so was the speed at which they flew around as well, each of them more beautifully and carefully controlled than she had ever seen before.

Even amongst the demon race, it was something that couldn't be done except by those with considerable ability, and furthermore, with that number of Magia Globus, Iris knew of only one person who could do as such.

"…Ojisama?"

The feeble voice that she wrang from her throat was filled with complete confidence, which is why despite it being unsuited for his current age, Luru flashed the cynical seeming smile that he often did as the demon king, and said,

"…Iris. Uncle's here."

It was the line that he had said the most to her, when he visited his friends house.

It seemed that Iris remembered, and after widening her eyes with an expression filled with shock, a stream of tears ran down her face as she began running towards him.

The approaching Iris was small and slender.

She lightly jumped into Luru's chest, and burying her face in it, she shouted with all she had,

"Ojisama-… Ojisama!"

Luru began to quietly pat Iris, who said nothing but that as she bawled.

After that, he glanced to the side at Gran.

The armour he was wearing was greatly dented, but he was alive, and neither were there any great injuries.

Since he seemed to have just fainted, Luru was relieved.

But really, Gran was also quite an unlucky man.

There was already no room left for doubt about the fact that Gran was a first rate adventurer.

Even if that technique was quite high level, and it was his first time seeing it, normally it would have been impossible for him to have been taken out without doing a thing.

That's why it wasn't as though Gran couldn't see through Iris' Magia Globus.

This time there was nothing that could be said except that it was a bad choice of opponent.

Gran had probably responded to Iris' magecraft as a normal Magia Globus.

He must have judged that cloaking his armour in mana would be enough to handle it.

Like that, he'd be able to change positions easily, and on top of that he could dull the opponent's morale; fact, it was because he was a veteran adventurer that he was able to consider these things and take action the way he did.

However, the skill that was indispensible to the ancient demon race was lethal to Gran.

Being able to see the circulation of the opponents mana, and then firing magic that would decompose it, was a skill that any full-fledged

demon soldier possessed.

However, that kind of technique had been lost to the ages, and Gran who lived in the modern era couldn't deal with it.

The simplest method for him would have been to simply avoid it, but if he didn't know about the technique, then there was no reason he would take such an action.

In other ways, it was because of all this that things ended the way they did.

It really was pitiful.

And then whilst thinking about all this, Luru was at his wits' end about what to do about all this.

Iris was one of the issues, and what he would say to Gran was another.

Once he got back to the village, he had to say something to Yuumis as well.

His objectives of saving his friends and investigating the purpose of this ruin was more or less accomplished but the amount of problems it had given birth to were too many.

Having said that though…

He looked at the crying girl at his chest.

When he did, she looked back up at him.

It was an awful looking face.

The face that really should have looked like a doll's was now soaked

with mucus and tears.

"Pfft…"

Because it was just too much, Luru had to stifle a laugh.

Seeing this, Iris pouted her cheeks a little.

"H-, how cruel… I have been living all this time thinking of taking revenge for you, Ojisama, but you laugh at me like that! Honestly…!"

"…But you really should look in a mirror. You look terrible, you know."

Being told that, Iris tilted her head a little and asked,

"Is it truly that bad…? …Speaking of which, the way you speak has changed slightly, has it not? …And if I look carefully, your face too… What is going on? Mmm? Which reminds me, you should have perished in the battle with the hero but… And what time is it now? Where is this place?"

Once she began questioning one thing, a whole load of questions began to surface.

Luru as well couldn't so quickly organise and answer these questions, so without any other choice he said,

"I'll explain it later… A lot happened."

"A lot… you say?"

“Yeah, a lot.”

“I see… Ah-, speaking of which, is the person that I sent flying earlier all right? They are one of your acquaintances, are they not? Umm, I believed them an enemy, and…”

Iris who nodded to Luru’s words started to become flustered.

Normally Iris wasn’t the type to hold hatred towards humans.

It seemed that she attacked in the beginning because she had just woken up, and moreover had been thinking about revenge for Luru as well.

However, Luru was alive, and now that she was fully conscious, she had calmed down.

Luru smiled at the panicked Iris once again.

“You know, even if you say that now… Well, that man, Gran, is alive though, so all you have to do is apologise later. He’ll probably forgive you.”

“Are they a magnanimous person, I wonder… So there are people as generous as Ojisama even in the human race, I see!”

“No, I’m not really that magnanimous, but… Gran doesn’t fuss about the details, so I think it might go well if we write it off as an unfortunate accident.”

“T-, then let us do as such…”

Their triling conversation was nostalgic, and Luru felt for the first time in a long time, fulfilled.

Once Gran woke up, first they’d start off with an explanation.

After that, they’d return to the village and explain to Yuumis as well.

After that, and after that…

Whilst imagining a bright future with an optimism that would have been unimaginable thus far, Luru continued to chat with Iris.

TL Notes:

Iris uses ‘watakushi’. If you don’t know what that is, don’t worry. Also she speaks very politely. It doesn’t flow as well in English because we now have fewer ‘levels’ of polite speech, but whatever. It’s a fantasy; get on board with it.

As you probably know, a great many East Asian cultures refer to people of certain age by corresponding familial relationship. In Japan they are ‘older brother’, ‘older sister’, ‘aunt’, ‘uncle’, ‘grandmother’, ‘grandfather’.

Here, Ojisama literally means ‘esteemed uncle’, but he is not actually her relative, but rather a close older male of an age appropriate of an uncle.

Strictly speaking, 弾 can also mean ‘ball’, ‘bead’, ‘orb’, *etc.* but I prefer the translations of ‘___弾’ as ‘___ bullet’ when its a projectile weapon/skill. From the ‘globus’ part of the name though, you can tell that it also means ‘ball’.

/Chapter 8 END

Chapter 9 – Discussion *

It wasn't as though they couldn't forcefully awaken the unconscious Gran, but on top of feeling awkward about waking up a man who had been knocked out by a huge impact and now lay crumpled on the floor, Luru felt that he needed to have a discussion with Iris to a degree about certain things, so he decided to have a question and answer session, and discuss what they were going to do from now on.

To begin with, it was on his mind; why was Iris sleeping in long term sleeping equipment in a ruin like this?

Furthermore, just what on earth had happened to their brethren after Demon King Luruslia Nord had fallen to the heroes?

After calming down Iris who was almost exhausted from crying, and then having her sit down, Luru sat down beside her an began talking to find out about these two questions.

"So… I have some questions, but would you be fine with answering?"

Iris nodded as though it was obvious, and began speaking.

"Of course! By all means, please order me as you please. And… I too have some things that I wish to ask. If it is fine with you, would you answer as well?"

Now that it was mentioned, Luru thought 'Ahh, that's right', and began to think.

From Iris' point of view, certainly she believed that Luru was the demon king, but not only were his features that of a human, but on top of that, his appearance had changed and he was now a child; an incomprehensible situation.

It might be better for him to explain these things first…

Thinking this, Luru nodded.

"Yeah, definitely. You must be holding doubts about whether I'm really Demon King Luruslia Nord, huh…"

Thinking about the reality, it wouldn't have been at all strange for her to be suspicious of him from now on, or so Luru thought.

However, Iris shook her head and said,

"Not at all! Ojisama is Ojisama! There is no mistaking it. I hold no doubts about this matter…"

The tears that were supposed to have disappeared were gathering like beads again as Iris said this, and she spoke with such intensity that Luru was taken aback.

He certainly hadn't expected her to have believed him to this extent, after all.

He had expected it to be at best a, 'that possibility exists' sort of level, so her words which were the same as saying she had zero doubt, were shocking to him.

"I'm grateful but… why?"

“It is because of your Magia Globus beanbag. You did so because you also thought I would recognise it, did you not? To control that number of Magia Globus, no matter how talented a demon they may be, there is nobody who can do so besides you, Ojisama.”

“Certain I was thinking that it’d be nice if you remembered but… is it really enough to be that sure? Your esteemed father… Bacchus; couldn’t he do this too?”

No matter how great Luru was amongst the demon race at manipulating mana, right now he couldn’t do all that much in this body.

There was also the fact that he wasn’t used to it yet, and the ability of this body was different to when he was a demon.

It was because manipulating Magia Globus was done outside of the body, and Iris, being a demon, had fired off mana that had the same feeling as when he was demon king; it was very likely that if somebody told him to do the same thing again by himself, he’d be unable to.

Furthermore, Luru had the feeling that his sworn friend would be able to do at least that much as well.

However, Iris shook her head.

“No. Father could not do it. How should I put it…? That person was bad with fine control of mana, and though only a little, he had trouble with precision activities, such as the likes of Magia Globus control. I have memories of playing this with him many times, but his numbered 10 at best. For him to control almost a hundred like you did… was impossible.”

Now that it was mentioned, Iris’ father, Bacchus Taesnola, had a part of him that was a little sketchy with the details, and Luru had memories of him being bad with detailed work.

When it came to battling he was an extremely skilled person, and was notably for being able to take on even an army by himself, but Luru hadn't ever seen him do any fine work with mana.

Due to his mighty mana, he was a man who relied on large scale battle magic, and after circulating mana through his body he engaged in hand-to-hand combat. Because of this, perhaps he hardly ever did anything like controlling Magia Globus.

"Certainly I can understand if its him, but… there should be others, right? Myutos or Reine, for example."

Both of them were once Luru's subordinates, and known as excellent magic and magecraft specialists.

Myutos was a shrivelled and neurotic magus, whilst Reine was a stupid woman with stupidly powerful mana who loved to destroy things.

However, Iris shook her head.

"I do not believe that Myutos-ojiisama was incapable of doing so, but had he the free time to play with Magia Globus beanbags, he would have spent it on something else to begin with, and Reine-oneesama was perhaps a little too capricious perhaps I should say… She would lose interest in doing something like this, so…"

It wasn't that they couldn't do it, but that their personalities meant that they wouldn't, huh?

Luru understand quite well what Iris was talking about.

If you had to categorise them, Myutos had the disposition of a scholar, and Reine was the type of retard who liked to fire off flashy magic.

And then to Luru's shock, the memories were so nostalgic that he

teared up.

He hadn't thought that he'd tear up over such a pointless topic.

Both Myutos and Reine had messed about in the day and he'd often turned a cold shoulder on them, but he realised that he quite liked them.

Noticing Luru's behaviour, Iris said in worry,

"My apologies… I have brought up a topic painful for you who were defeated halfway…"

"No… It's fine. On the contrary, I'm happy that a nostalgic topic came up. But I see… Just like you say, perhaps I'm the only one who could do it."

To Luru who pulled himself together and continued speaking, Iris agreed.

"Yes. That is how it is. However, there is something mysterious and odd about this."

"What?"

"There is no mistake that you are Ojisama, however, what on earth is that body of yours? It is unmistakably that of a human's. Furthermore, the age is… It is difficult to say this, but you appear to be a child just like I am. Just what on earth happened…? I believed I could restrain my deep interest, but…"

“Ahh… You’re right. Earlier I said that a lot happened, but…”

“Come to think of it, you did indeed say as such. What did you mean…?”

To Iris who had tilted her head in wonder, Luru was a little confused at how to explain things to her.

However, it was not that difficult an explanation.

Were he to explain it to a human he might need to explain things in quite some detail, but with a demon, it would be fine even with a single word, Luru remembered.

Thus, he spoke.

“It’s simple… Iris. I experienced reincarnation.”

Iris’ widened eyes displayed to Luru her shock.

However, it didn’t at all feel like she had heard something impossible, but rather it seemed close to the kind of shock that someone got from suddenly hearing some joyful news.

Reincarnation was part of the demon race’s faith.

They believed that the world revolved like that, and after inheriting a soul, one would continue living as the next generation.

It was because they believed that that the demons could fight with strong spirits.

After that, Iris slowly took a breath, and asked a question.

“…Which means that after you died, Ojisama, a certain amount of time passed and you were reincarnated as a human?”

Luru smiled at her speed in understanding.

Were he explaining to a human, something like this probably wouldn't have happened.

In the past, reincarnation was something thought of as heresy to humans, and it was almost outside their imagination.

It would certainly be a bother to explain this way of thinking from start to finish.

'Once living beings died, that was the end'.

That was what humans believed.

Luru answered Iris' question.

"That's how it is. Right now I'm definitely a human. In other words, I have a human mother and father. Both of them are good people… and kind people."

Recalling that Iris might be opposed to this, Luru said what he did.

Though Iris wasn't the type of hate humans, they were a species that the demons had gone to war with.

It was quite possible that she didn't hold good will towards them.

To begin with, it was because Iris had felt hatred towards the humans when she had just woken up.

However, the words that left Iris' mouth were unexpected.

"Having heard those words… Just why, I wonder? I feel relieved."

“Um, why’s that?”

Luru questioned her with his head tilted to the side.

“It is probably that… hearing about how you reincarnated, Ojisama, and on top of that how you were living a satisfying life as a human, it felt that the little biases that I had were washed away… Huhu.”

Iris suddenly smiled.

When Luru tilted his head in wonder, Iris continued to speak.

“Actually… I may have mentioned this earlier, but after you passed away, Ojisama, my heart was filled with vengeance. I became quite wild…”

With a snap, it felt like time had stopped.

‘For the beautiful and graceful, silver-haired Iris to have become “wild”, just what…?’

Perhaps because she read Luru’s expression, Iris shook her head in a fluster and began defending herself.

It might have been because she didn’t want Luru to dislike her.

“No! No! You are mistaken… Umm, even though I say I was wild… you see… I did not do anything too terrible. It was just to the degree of bringing along some slightly delinquent demons and annihilating the humans forces, or sneaking into the humans camps and leaving the officers and soldiers messages like『I can kill you at any time, so prepare yourself』while they slept. It was only these types of things at worst!”

‘That’s plenty as it is…’ thought Luru, but sensing that he shouldn’t play the straight man in this atmosphere, Luru decided to change the subject.

“Well, let’s leave that aside. Anyway, does the fact that you could still do that after I died mean that the demon race weren’t wiped out or anything? The way things were going, I wouldn’t have thought it strange if they started large scale demon hunting, but…?”

“Ahh… I see. You do not know about it yet, Ojisama… Indeed, there was demon hunting. It was a truly unfortunate time. The Church dispatched holy knights and the demon race became steadily cornered, and our numbers fell. Had it continued, I believe even the proud demon race would have been eradicated.”

“Had it continued? It didn’t?”

It was unexpected; for the human race who hated them that much to have stopped hunting them, that is.

Iris continued.

“Rather than not continuing, perhaps it would be more accurate to say that they were unable to continue. A while after you passed away, Ojisama, the human forces were divided into two. In other words, they began to experience in-fighting. It was because a clear target like the demon king had disappeared, or so father said, but perhaps the reality was just as he said… One side used the Church as a banner, and the other side was represented by the one who finished you off, Ojisama…”

“…The hero, huh?”

It was something that he could imagine.

In the very end, the seed that Luru had sowed; it had borne fruit.

He didn't know if it was for good or for bad, but that hero had certainly faithfully fulfilled her promise.

However, the result of that was that the human race split in two.

"Yes. It is quite ironic. The one who killed the demon king was the one who saved the demon race from doom. And then in truth… I do not know what happened after that. I do not know how many years passed, but how is the situation now? It has been on my mind."

When it got to the part he was most concerned about, Iris merely said that and shook her head.

Luru tilted his head in shock.

"…What do you mean by that?"

As though she was recalling it, Iris slowly answered Luru's question.

"I mentioned that I brought along some delinquents to attack the humans. One day while I was doing so, somebody used that as an opportunity to capture me… Before I realised it, I was lying atop a bed someplace I did not recognise, and an intolerably sleepiness overcame me. By the time I noticed that it was a long term sleeping device, it was just before I fell asleep, and already too late. And like that, I fell asleep and once I awoke, you were before my eyes, Ojisama. Now that I think about it, that place was probably here, huh?"

“Meaning that you didn’t get in the long term sleeping equipment yourself?”

It wasn’t something that boded too well.

The information that Iris gave was interrupted halfway.

Iris seemed dissatisfied with the information she had herself, and pouted a little while she continued speaking. What she spoke of next was about the characteristics of her captor.

“Yes… There were a somewhat incomprehensible person. They donned a jet-black robe, and because of the hood, I could not see their face. They probably also had a recognition obstruction type of Magus Tool equipped. After all, even when I took a good look at them, I could not find anything out about them… However, I realised that from their figure and their scent, they were probably a woman…”

They couldn’t figure out anything with just that.

Their clothing was nothing more than that of a normal magician or magus, and there were as many female magicians and magi as stars in the sky.

However, the act of capturing a demon without harm meant that they could be expected to be somebody of considerable skill.

Their identity was something to think about. As was their objective.

“I see… But just who was it? Moreover, what’s it mean that they aimed for you, Iris, and even went out of their way to put you in a long term sleeping device?”

“That is something I would like to ask as well. However… right now I feel

thankful towards them.”

Iris’ voice and expression suddenly became gentle, and she gazed at Luru with a smile.

Luru tilted his head in wonder.

“Why?”

“Because of them, I was able to meet with you, Ojisama.”

Her voice was filled with deep emotion.

Because she seemed that happy, Luru felt a strong regret, thinking that he had some something inexcusable to her in the past.

“…Iris.”

To Luru who called her name, Iris spoke as thought entreating him.

“Ojisama. Please… do not die in such a manner again. This is a request from all demons.”

She was probably speaking of how he challenged the heroes by himself.

Because the others were stuck fighting the human armies and warriors Luru had done what he did, but thinking about it now there may have been a better option.

That’s why Luru obediently apologised.

"…It was my bad… But well, I'm a human now. I don't think it'll end up like that again."

"…That seems about right. I would be happy if that were the the case. However… now that you are a human, Ojisama, there is a little problem…"

"What would that be?"

"What kind of position would I need to take to stay by your side?"

Because Iris had spoken about it as though it were obvious, for an instant, Luru's words were stuck in his throat.

However, Luru had decided in his heart that he would keep her nearby ever since he had seen her lying on the bed of the long term sleeping device.

That's why he immediately changed gears, and began talking about how they could do so.

"About that, there are some things we need to talk about before that, or we won't make any progress… Iris, just a while ago you asked about what time it was. Why did you ask that?"

"The long term sleeping device being what it was, I thought it appropriate to ask. Before I fell asleep I had thought so as well, but immediately after I woke up I recognised it as what it was. Moreover, considering the amount of mana that my body had lost, I believed that I had slept for quite a long time. It wouldn't be odd had I slept for a number of years, or even a number of decades, I thought."

It seems that Iris' intuition told her that she had slept for roughly that magnitude of time.

However, the reality was different.

The time that had passed was much, much longer.

And the long flow of time had washed away everything that Luru and Iris had known.

Thinking that he had no choice but to tell her, with a half-desperate resolution, Luru spoke.

"Iris. Listen to me carefully. The current era is a long time after the one we once lived in. It's probable that some thousands of have passed."

"Eh?"

Iris greatly tilted her head to the side.

TL Notes:

Took liberties with the line「眠っていた場所が場所ですから。眠る直前にも思ったことですが、起きてすぐ、長期睡眠装置だと認識いたしました。」because it would have sounded much, much too awkward in English. Perhaps there was a better way to do it, but it hasn't come to mind yet.

/Chapter 9 END

Chapter 10 – The Current Situation, and the Future ✻

“Umm, Ojisama. What did you just say?”

Iris’ sleek silver hair fell from her shoulder as she tilted her head to the side.

Luru had been thinking that he didn’t want to tell her if possible, but that was impossible.

As long as you were living in this world, this era, it was something you needed to accept at the bare minimum.

That’s why he told Iris clearly.

“…Iris. From that time; from the time that I was killed by the hero, thousands of years have passed. I’ll say this just in case, but this is definitely not some misunderstanding. It’s something that I’ve properly confirmed; a reality. Having said that though, I’m only estimating based on things I’ve come across in books and hearsay, so there might be a measurement error, but…”

While speaking about this, Luru hinted that there might be a small possibility of a mistake.

It was in consideration for Iris.

He thought that it might be easier to accept if he spoke about it like that.

Luru had confirmed that there was no mistaking that thousands of years had passed since those days, but it was unreasonable to expect the girl before him to accept immediately.

For now he would have her keep mistakes in mind as a possibility, and then have her slowly comprehend and believe in the reality.

However, Luru had underestimated Iris a little.

There was no mistake that Iris felt shock at Luru's words, but even so, she was certainly not rejecting his words.

On the contrary, she was properly processing this inside, and even investigated on top of that.

"That is… You must have found some proof that convinced you, correct?"

Whilst feeling shocked, Luru slowly nodded.

Despite her proper speech and the intelligence she had, Iris was still a child.

Unlike Luru, there was no mistake that she was genuinely a child of roughly 10 years old.

Though she had lived a few years after Luru's death, there was no mistake that she was not yet an adult.

But despite this, Iris calmly spoke to Luru with a pensive expression.

"Ojisama. Ojisama. I am fine… I cannot say that I was prepared, but though I feel sad at having those close to me suddenly having gone far away, but I have become a little used to it already…"

Her words contained a deep grief, and the remains of a sadness that had been worn down from experience, time and time again.

'Right…' thought Luru.

The period in which Iris had lived, and the period in which Luru had lived were the same.

The weight of a life was unbelievably light, and both of them have seen over and over the scene of a comrade losing their life just a few dozen centimetres away from them.

Though Iris was still a child, she had gone through such experiences; being concerned about her resolution was an incredibly foolish act.

"…Sorry."

So Luru apologised.

It was an apology as the demon king for failing to protect his race, as well as an apology as her friend for failing to protect his own life.

Iris accepted them with her eyes straight ahead, and then smiled with a soft expression.

"It is fine… Ojisama. I believe that you tried your absolute best. Were it not for you, the demon race probably would not have even survived as long as it did… Both as a banner under which we rallied, as well as the king that we were proud of, you were the hope of we demons. That is why… it is fine. …I apologise. Our conversation has taken a gloomy turn, has it not? I have even made you worry… Right now, what is more important is that I must grasp the current situation. Is that not so, Ojisama?"

Like that, Iris immediately recovered.

Luru felt that he had seen the strength of females.

He was moved by their ability to accept everything, and still choose to move forward.

Perhaps it was just Iris in particular.

However, Luru didn't think too deeply about it, and continued the conversation to tell Iris what she needed to hear.

"You're right… We can talk about the past whenever we want. Right… Iris. I'll confirm it once more. Since that era, thousands of years have passed. And this is important; in the current era, it seems that those of the demon race like you and I don't exist."

"…Is that to say that over the thousands of years, they perished?"

Iris asked with a feeble voice, casting her eyes downwards in sorrow.

The demon race had fallen to ruin. It was something that had also passed through Luru's mind; a sad reality.

However, Iris was right here before him.

There might be other members of the demon race like her that survived into the present.

That was what he now thought.

That's why Luru shook his head.

It was because they shouldn't give up hope.

As Luru began to explain, Iris' expression showed her difficult to express, strange feelings.

Even if she was told that her own race had become something of legend, it was understandable that she some strange emotions about it.

You could say that her expression was natural.

“That is… I seem to have become a very strange existence, haven’t I? However, as you can see, I exist… Will I not be caught if discovered?”

Iris seemed to feel a little worried.

However, Luru shook his head at her question.

“That worry is probably needless, I think. The adventurer that you blew away… Gran, didn’t realise that you were an ancient demon when he saw you sleeping.”

Considering that fact, it was probable that they could overcome any problems by saying that Iris was a human.

There might be a tool that identified your race, but the kind of technology needed for that had declined in this era.

On top of that, Luru thought that it might be easy to find some kind of way out of it.

However, Iris was more cautious than he’d expected, and asked for more details.

“Could it not be the case that only that person doesn’t know?”

Certainly it wasn’t impossible.

In truth he wanted to go to a large town and confirm with more people, but right now that would be difficult.

However, adventurers like Gran and Yuumis were at the end of the day, essentially jack of all trades.

Their knowledge covered things from the everyday to the professional.

It was difficult to imagine that they didn’t even have a common sense

level of knowledge.

If Yuumis didn't know either, then it wouldn't it support his theory? Or so Luru was thinking.

Yuumis was an ancient demon race freak, and should have known about them in more detail than the average person. For even somebody like her to be unaware of the racial traits of the demon race, meant that Luru's prediction was correct, you could say.

That's why Luru explained this to Iris, with that thought as the main principle.

"I think it'd be best to consider such information as something that wasn't passed down, not only to Gran, but to normal people as well. It seems that that guy is a pretty skilled adventurer, after all. I don't think there's any mistake in seeing it as something that normal people don't know. I don't know about people with a scholar's level of knowledge but… We can confirm that later."

Having heard that much, Iris seemed to finally accept it.

Nodding with a smile, she said,

"I understand. From what I have heard, there seem to be few obstacles that stand in the way of my being by your side, Ojisama."

Like that, Iris touched on the heart of the matter.

Indeed, you could say that having thought it out that far, there probably wouldn't be any problems regarding her race.

However, if Iris wanted to stay by Luru's side, there was a problem that she had to overcome no matter what.

“Yeah, you’re right. There basically don’t seem to be any problems. Like I mentioned before, if we play you off as a human, and moreover an orphan who’s lost her parents, then… But, I also mentioned earlier that I have parents, you see. If we’re to live together, it’s something that we’ll have to overcome no matter what.”

So he said, but Luru didn’t think that it would be a big deal.

As long as Iris understood a certain amount about this era, if they could adjust her story later then things would probably work out somehow.

Hearing Luru’s words, Iris tilted her head to the side.

“Regarding your… parents…? Indeed. I have no skills to offer, and would just become a bother if I did nothing but eat, wouldn’t I…?”

Saying that, Iris began feeling depressed, to which Luru shook his head in a panic.

“No, no, it’s not that! It’s nothing so difficult. It’s just that, if I brought home a girl and told them that I wanted to live with her, my parents wouldn’t just casually accept, right? That’s why I was thinking that we had to deal with that somehow…”

Having heard that, Iris’s expression seemed to say ‘Whaat, is that it?’ as she clapped her hands together as though she had thought of a good idea.

“In that case, if they hire me as a maid, then!”

What came out of her mouth was that shocking proposal.

However, there was of course no way he could get on board with this.

His home was the house of a noble family. Because of that, they could certainly go ahead with the idea if they wanted, but Iris was the daughter of his friend, and he knew that his friend cared quite a lot for her.

Because of that, there were certainly feelings of wanting to spoil Iris in Luru's heart.

That's why Luru shook his head.

"That's no good… Your hands will become rough."

That's why he had no choice but to saying something subtle that seemed like an excuse.

However, it seems that Iris wouldn't accept it.

"It is all right! Even as I am, I am still a member of the demon race, low my position may be. My hands will not become rough with just something like washing dishes!"

Certainly, that might have been true, but that wasn't what Luru really wanted to say.

However, because he didn't have any way of saying it aloud, Luru decided that he had no choice but to deal with the problem later.

"…Well, how about we leave that aside for now? We can just decide later. Ahh, I'm sure it'll work out. Anyway… let's go together to the village I'm living in, and have you meet my mother in person. After that, we'll talk her into accepting you into our house. Yeah, let's do that."

At last, Luru ended up forming some haphazard plan, and Iris sighed at him.

“…Like I said, I would have been fine as a maid…”

Iris said.

◆◇◆◇◆

A short while after that, Gran opened his eyes.

“…Friggin hurts… Oi”

Probably because he had hit them against the wall when Iris blew him away, Gran was now rubbing his head and hips as he stood up. And then, the moment he noticed the awakened Iris,

“…!?”

he backed away with all his strength, and vigilantly guarded with the greatsword that had just now been lying on the ground.

However, Iris didn’t particularly attack him, and moreover, after greatly tilting his head at Luru who was sitting next to her, he loudly shouted from a distance.

“Oi! What’s going on!?”

“Ohhh, it seems that it was a misunderstanding! She said that she won’t attack you any more!”

Luru shouted back in a voice just as loud.

Gran then replied,

“Haah!? …I have no idea what you’re on about… But it seems she really won’t attack, huh. There’s no bloodlust[/killing intent]…”

Muttered Gran, as he approached them.

His greatsword went back into its scabbard, and he placed it back on his back.

It seems that he felt there was no longer any need to fight.

And truly, the antagonism that Iris had shown when she first woke up was now nowhere to be seen and she was now just smiling in a seemingly good mood, so Gran ended up losing his ill-will as well.

However, it seems that he still hadn’t forgotten the intensity of the first blow, and gazed at Iris like he was looking at a wild beast, before asking,

“…Hey, little miss[/ojouchan].”

“Yes? Whatever is the matter, Gran-sama?”

“I don’t really fit the title “Gran-sama”, but… Well whatever. Why did you attack me?”

It was an extremely natural thing to ask.

No matter how broad-minded Gran was, being attack without any reason whatsoever was beyond acceptable.

If they wanted to reconcile, then she had to at least tell him the reason why.

Iris understood this, and while her face cheeks red in embarrassment, she said,

"That was… although I am embarrassed to say this, what people refer to as a misunderstanding, or a case of mistaken identity…"

"What do you mean?"

"For a moment, I mistook you, Gran-sama, for the enemy that killed somebody very important to me. However, now that I take another look, you seem completely different… I am truly ashamed… I realise that it changes nothing now, but I am truly sorry for what I did…"

Hearing this, Gran made a slightly sad expression and muttered in a barely audible volume,

"Taking revenge at that age, huh… So the reason she's that skilled at magecraft is for revenge… Her daily training must've been hard enough to spew blood… It's a bloody cruel world."

Because of his mana circulation, Luru had physical capabilities that exceeded a normal person's, meaning that he could hear Gran perfectly, but the two of them didn't particularly point anything out.

After that, Gran flashed a bright smile and spoke.

“I got it! If that’s how it is, then there’s no problem. Let’s leave this as an unlucky accident!”

He was a man you wanted to like.

Because of this time’s events, both Luru and Iris thought so from the bottom of their hearts.

“It truly helps that you are willing to say that. Thank you very much, Gran-sama.”

Said Iris, as she bowed.

“Like I said, -sama doesn’t suit me…”

Replied Gran, but he didn’t seem unhappy.

Since it seemed that they’d be able to leave here without any ill feelings, Luru felt relieved.

He spoke.

“Now that we’ve reconciled, how about we return to the village? There’s also the issue of this girl, …Iris, after all.”

“Ahh… That’s right, why was this little miss in a place like this?”\

At Gran’s question, Luru replied,

“I asked about this while you were sleeping, but it seems that while she was being chased by an enemy, she unfortunately fell into a trap and was stuck sleeping. We don’t know how long she’s been sleeping, but we probably don’t have a way to check. Her parents don’t seem to be around anymore… Since we got along after talking for a while, I was wondering if she couldn’t live with us in the village.”

He didn’t tell a single lie.

It was just that he omitted the details.

Gran was nodding, seemingly fine with this explanation.

Iris didn’t particularly interject, and it seems she was leaving it up to Luru.

“I see. A trap, huh. Well, I guess with these kind of ruins, there’s stuff like that too, huh. Her parents being gone means that… she doesn’t have anybody to rely on, huh?”

“Yeah.”

“Meaning… Right. Since you two got along, it might be better for her to live close to you, huh… If she went to the city, she’d just end up in the slums after all…”

Saying that, Gran seemed to look into the distance, perhaps because he was considering her welfare as a child who lost her parents at a young age, and ended up cornered by an enemy.

It seems that Gran was a compassionate person.

Progressing with their mutual understanding like that, Luru spoke.

“Well then, shall we go?”

“Aye.”

“Yes, let us go.”

Like that, the three of them began heading towards the exit of the ruin.

TL Notes:

‘He was a man you wanted to like.’ is actually ‘He was a man who made you feel good.’ but that sounds dirty & awks to me. Is it because I’m a pervert, or…?

/Chapter 10 END

Chapter 11 – Collapse *

Thinking back upon it, coming from the village to the depths of the ruins was nothing but a series of huge troubles, but going from inside the ruins to the outside took almost no effort at all, and ended with nothing but walking.

"...But still, in the end, was this ruin an ancient demon ruin?"

Muttered Gran, the first one to crawl out of the ruins, to Luru and Iris who were still in the darkness of the ruins.

By the time they left it, the dark curtain of the night had already fallen, so it was dim.

However, perhaps because the moon was out, it was still much brighter than the inside of the ruins, and the outside was filled with the indigo coloured darkness.

"I wonder about that. Wouldn't it be fine to get Yuumis to investigate? She's knowledgeable, isn't she?"

Luru who knew it was definitely an ancient demon ruin, or at least one with some kind of relation to them, just played dumb.

According to Gran, in this age there was no way to determine if something was an ancient demon ruin or not, so he didn't want to get involved in any unnecessary trouble.

There was also that he wanted Yuumis to investigate appropriately, fulfil her desires for her romance, and on top of that he wanted her to state her knowledge on it.

At the end of the day, no matter how many books he read, Luru had passed no more than seven years of his life, and his only information sources were basically only the books at home and his parents, the people in the village, and the merchants that came; speaking frankly, he was ignorant of the world.

There was no way he could know in detail about what was in this world.

At best, he knew the name of the neighbouring countries, and broadly about what kind of regions they were, and what they produced; there was no way for him to find out more than this.

Until he asked Gran about the state of the tools in the city, he didn't even know that primitive Magus Tools existed.

Though it was true that from the state of the village he had expected that over these thousands of years, the technology had degenerated, there was quite a gap between what he imagined and seeing and hearing about the reality himself.

Perhaps there existed in this world, even magics and technologies that Luru hadn't even thought of; because of that, he might have no choice but to act.

No, he had to. At least that was what Luru thought after this time's adventure in the ruins.

That's why he was thinking that once he got back to the village, he wanted to speak with Yuumis who seemed to have the atmosphere of quite an expert, but thinking about the details of the events leading up to now, it didn't seem that it would be too easy.

If you thought about her interactions with Gran as an adventurer pair, you could tell that she didn't seem the type to hold grudges[/drag things out].

However, they would still have to make up first, and Luru was feeling

just a little reluctant[/pressured] at having to do that.

Whilst thinking about that, Luru crawled out of the ruins.

After the last member Iris finally crawled out, all of them gazed at the ruin.

It was already night so they couldn't see it too clearly.

However, the sight of the ruins illuminated by the moonlight was fantastical, and beautiful.

This was where Iris had been sleeping.

Because of that, Luru was able to meet her again in this world.

Right now, she was the only brethren he had in this world.

Rusty was close to him, as were his parents, and the people of the village; there was no mistake about this.

However, Luru held many secrets that he couldn't talk to them about.

There was nobody he could share these with, or in the true sense of the words, tell everything to.

That's why the fact that Iris was by his side was to Luru, fortune that seemed like a miracle.

Iris was gazing at the ruins as well.

He couldn't tell what emotions lay in those eyes of hers.

However, after she removed her gaze from the ruins, her eyes met with Luru's, and she suddenly began to smile.

And at this difficult to describe expression that eased his heart, Luru felt that something that had been frozen in his heart had thawed for the first time since he was born.

"Well, there's no use in watching this forever... Let's make a detailed exploration once we have Yuumis. This ruin is that big of a find. A research team might even be dispatched from the capital. It's sure gunna get busy, huh...!"

Said Gran with a smile.

It was what an adventurer was supposed to be doing; opening up new frontiers.

Whether they were frontiers in regards to the land, or in regards to treasure, or in regards to the sphere of research, it was undeniably the job of the adventurers.

And it was through these achievements piled again and again that their name became famous.

With this time's discovery, Gran and Yuumis would probably become quite famous.

They might have already possessed fame and fortune, but even so, something like this wouldn't hurt no matter how much of it you had.

"I'm so envious, Gran."

That's why Luru ended up saying that on a whim,.

He wasn't jealous or anything, and it was just a joke with some irony mixed in.

They were words he spoke hoping to get a rise out of Gran, but as

expected you could perhaps say, Gran wasn't the type of be bothered by this.

While giving a manly[/hearty] smile, he declared something shocking.

"Hahahah! Watcha saying? You're gunna become busy too, yanno?"

"...Hah?"

Luru tilted his head at Gran's words.

As for Iris, she was chuckling quietly, and it seems that she understood the meaning behind Gran's words.

"I was sleeping for a very long time, so I don't fully understand the circumstances but... Luru-sama, you too explored the ruin with Gran-sama, did you not? ...Being the case, it would not be strange to take you as a person with the important achievement of discovering a ruin, would it...?"

At Iris' words, Luru finally realised, 'Ahh, that might be so.' but even so, Luru was still a child.

The ones praised for such discoveries were adventurers, and because of reasons like 'A village child won't get dragged into that kind of thing.', Luru thought, 'Isn't that impossible?' and refuted Gran.

"Don't be ridiculous... I'm just a seven year old child, you know? Even if you say that I was one of the explorers or whatever, nobody would believe you, you know?"

However, Gran shook his head as though he felt no problems at all.

“No, everybody would believe it I think. If I go around spreading it, that is.”

“…What?”

“My mouth is looser than a potato sack you know?[Sorry. Couldn’t think of Eng equivalent expression so made one up.] If I start drinking I’m confident that I’ll immediately start talking about what happened today… Moreover, Yuumis is mortified at having her barrier tampered with by you, so she’ll start spreading the same thing, yanno. You should already know what bad drunks we are, right? Just the other day, you saw it yourself after all.”

For an instant, Luru thought to seriously ask him to stop, but seeing how bold he was, it seemed pointless to Luru, so he gave up.

To begin with, thinking about it carefully, he wasn’t planning on hiding for the rest of his life or anything.

It was just to the degree of not wanting to start insisting in public that he used to be the demon king, and he held no reservations about using the magecraft and martial arts that he had acquired.

He was fine with these rumours being spread.

It was a topic that wasn’t a problem at all.

Having said that though, he felt like passing on both being treated like a braggart, and being looked down on.

If it was spread that a seven year old held the achievements of being a

ruins explorer, he would probably end up being called a liar and looked down on.

About these problems, Luru asked Gran.

He replied,

"Well, it'll probably be fine not to worry too much about that. Though we look like this, Yuumis and I are actually quite famous adventurers in the capital. If the two of us evaluate you highly, as long as they aren't a total idiot, they aren't gunna pick a fight with you. Moreover, as long as you're in the village, you won't get involved with those sort of guys. Well, since there is a ruin, there might be more adventurers coming here than before, but, it's just to that degree. Don't worry about it so much… And well, honestly, that's only if I start spreading it. In the end it was just a joke, so don't sweat it. If you really wanted me to spread it, and you wanted merits for what you did this time, then I don't mind since it's the truth and all but… You don't want that, right? I'll stay quiet, so relax."

Like that, Gran guaranteed him, so Luru felt relief that his lifestyle didn't seem like it'd be getting all that difficult.

In the end, what he said just now was just returning a joke to Luru's joke, and he probably had no intentions of spreading any rumours.

Gran was an adventurer, after all.

He couldn't be that loose-lipped, since his responsibility of confidentiality as an adventurer wasn't something that he could just toss away.

That's why in that sense, it was also a relief, Luru thought.

And like that, feeling like everything they needed to say before returning to the village had been said, the three of them began to head away from the ruins.

The next time they'd be coming would probably be tomorrow, or the day after...

Thinking this, just as they began to walk, a huge rumbling could be heard from behind them, and the three turned around.

When they did, the scene that lay before them was the round, above-ground entrance building collapsing.

"Oi, oi..."

Muttered Gran, holding his head.

Moreover, it didn't just stop there.

After the above-ground parts had finished collapsing, next was the sound of what seemed to be rumbling from beneath the earth.

If you put your ear against the ground and listened for where the sound was coming from, you could hear that it was coming from the ruins that stretched underground.

They were probably collapsed the same way the above-ground portions had.

Despite thinking that it was great that it happened after they left, Gran held his head at the sound coming from the discovery that he and Yuumis had finally found.

It was the same as their livelihoods.

Hearing the sounds of this collapsing away gave a similar feeling to helplessly watching money melt before their eyes.

After the rumbles of the ruins collapsing had mostly subsided, Luru lightly pat Gran on the shoulder, who was drooping his head lifelessly, and said,

“Well… This kind of thing can happen too, right?”

For an instant, Gran stared at Luru with a pathetic expression, and then dropped his shoulders.

“Seriously… When I’m with Yuumis, this kind of thing happens a lot, huh… I’m kinda used to it by now. Hahhh…”

However, he was quick to recover as well, and immediately straightened his back.

“Well then, should head back to the capital? We really don’t have anything to do anymore… In the end, our harvest was just the Magus Machines in the village, and the parts of the giants scattered outside the ruins, huh?”

“Isn’t this better than nothing at all?”

Said Iris gently, with a finger on her lip.

“If I had to say, then you’re right… It’s just that…”

“It’s just that?”

Tilting her head, Iris prompted him to continue.

Gran complied, and said,

“Yuumis is sure gunna cry, huh…”

Gran’s voice resounded amongst the masses of stone that were scattered about.

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When the three returned to the village, they saw Yuumis who was totally exhausted from maintaining the barrier all this time, glaring at them from the other side of the barrier.

It seems that Gran and Iris didn’t enter her eyes, and she was looking straight at Luru.

Though he was a former demon king, her gaze held enough strength that he drew back a little, and even Luru felt a little hesitant about speaking to her.

However, it seems that Yuumis had plenty of things to say to Luru.

Her mouth opened to spew a massive amount of abuse at Luru, and it ended up being a scene where Gran and Iris just silently watched them.

Luru sent a look of ‘Can’t one of you do something about this?’, but each of them had their own reasons for not meddling.

Gran simply just didn’t want to get involved once Yuumis became like this, and from what Iris heard about what Luru did to Yuumis, she felt that it couldn’t be helped.

Furthermore, to Iris it was a somehow nostalgic scene to see Luru being

scolded by someone, and because she had some rather problematic inclinations, she felt a little happy at watching it.

In the end, Luru was completely exhausted from being shouted at for an hour, and was collapsed on the ground.

On the other hand, Yuumis look completely refreshed with glossy skin, and seemed to be in a quite a good mood.

Normally yelling continuously would tire someone out, but this was different for Yuumis alone.

Though they wondered if she would be exhausted from mana depletion because she had to continuously maintain the barrier, it seems that this wasn't the case, and instead it was mental exhaustion because she had wondered if she could fix the barrier somehow and challenged herself to try it, only to conclude after a while that it was impossible after all.

However, after letting all of this stress out on Luru, it seems she became refreshed.

With that, Yuumis let go of all ill reserves, and spoke to Luru.

"I made sure that Rusty and the others went home. Also, as for you Luru, I told your mother for you… She probably doesn't know about your magic, right? It seemed that way, at least. That's why I didn't know if it was fine to tell her about it, so I just decided to say that you were safe with Gran. Making up a story that fits is something you'll have to work out yourself, okay?"

She was surprisingly considerate and attentive.

In the end, he had left the village without saying a thing to his mother,

so Luru was wondering what to do.

However, since Yuumis had said all of that for him, he felt that he'd be able to make up some excuse.

After thinking for a little, Luru nodded.

Seeing him nod in agreement, Yuumis moved onto the main topic.

"Then, would you mind taking down the barrier? It's impossible for me… Honestly, I have no idea how to undo it…"

It seemed that she really was having trouble, so Luru decided to take down the barrier and walked towards it.

However, before he could, Iris had walked up to it and after fiddling with it for a little, in the end the barrier was taken down as though it were smashed apart.

Seeing Iris do this, Yuumis said completely dumbfounded,

"Wh-… Whawhawha-!!

with her eyes spread wide in shock.

Seeing Yuumis' expression, Iris made a refreshed smile and declared to Yuumis,

"Well then. With this, everything should be fine, yes?"

Yuumis was lost for words, and Luru wondered just why on earth Iris had done that.

When he asked about it later, she said, “Because she had screamed at you too much, Ojisama. Though you were in the wrong as well, as your retainer, I could not hold back my desire for a little revenge, you see.”

Though he replied that she could have just stopped the screaming itself, Iris said something like “I could understand why Yuumis-sama was angry, so…” so there was nothing that could have been done about it.

With everybody becoming exhausted, Gran looked up at the dark night sky.

“Well, a lot happened today. It’s pretty late as well. I have things I want to explain to Yuumis as well, so how ‘bout we break up for now?”

Suggested Gran.

Things to discuss, and things to ask; there was no doubt that there was a lot to talk about.

However, truly, a lot too much had happened today.

The suggestion that going home, sleeping on things, and talk again later would be more fruitful, was Gran’s way of showing consideration.

Even with the blood rushing to her head, Yuumis understood that much, so with a face that seemed to say ‘can’t be helped, then’ she replied, “I get it already… Well then, I’m going, Gran.” and began to walk towards the inn.

However, Gran said,

“Yeah, I’ll be escorting these kids home, so head back first. I’ll come right after!”

and saw Yuumis off.

Yuumis seemed to have a lot she wanted to say as well, but because it certainly wouldn't do to have the seven year old looking Luru to go home by himself, it seems that she assented.

She returned to the inn, waving her hand.

However, she did not forget to get in a final word.

"Luru, and that girl too! Tomorrow you'd better explain everything properly!"

Which was in a way, a show of her concern.

You could feel from her screams at Luru quite a bit of worry for him.

At heart, she was the same as Gran; a considerate person.

It was because of this that the two of them adventured together.

Luru and Iris waved their hands at her, and began walking with Gran – towards Luru's house; in other words, the house of only noble family in this village, the Cadisnola Residence.

/Chapter 11 END

Chapter 12 – Anxiety and Secrets ✻

When Luru, Iris and Gran reached his house, they found his mother standing there, watching them.

She wore a calm expression.

It was still like the calm of an ocean, unwavering.

However, because it was Luru, he instinctively felt fear.

There was no mistaking that his mother, Medea, possessed a gentle and kind personality.

That's why he was used to seeing her calm, but even so, there were almost no instances where she stayed wordless after their eyes met.

Usually she would find something to say in a calm and graceful way.

Despite that, this time alone, not a single word came from her mouth.

Luru felt it extremely dangerous.

And as expected, he was right.

She was calm, but she approached Luru and spoke to him in a voice that felt like she was stifling her emotions with reason.

"…Where were you?"

'Didn't Yuumis tell you?' Luru wondered, but that wasn't what she meant by it.

'Where were you? What were you doing?' — she wanted to hear these

from his own mouth.

And Luru's judgement wasn't so bad that he didn't know what this was leading up to.

"…I, went to the ruins for a little."

The very moment he spoke, his mother's palm cut through the air.

Luru perceived this with his sharp senses, but dodging it would be unforgivable in more ways than one, so Luru resigned himself to it.

Slap

Luru's cheek throbbed painfully.

However, the one who was truly hurt wasn't Luru who was hit, but Medea who had hit him.

After the slap, Medea unsteadily walked towards Luru and then slowly and gently embraced him, murmuring,

"…I was worried, you know…?"

"Sorry… but I knew I had to go."

A normal parent would have probably have replied 'Don't talk back!' or 'Don't speak nonsense!' or 'What do you think a child could do if he went?'.

But Medea was somewhat different in this regard.

“…I see. Then, I guess it couldn’t be helped… Gran-san. Was my son of any help to you?”

Gran was flustered for an instant at being suddenly talked to, but he immediately regained his bearing as replied.

“He was definitely helpful. I plan on explaining to the village chief tomorrow but… we found some Magus Machines in the ruins, you see. They started operating and attacked the village but… the one who stopped them was Luru. Yuumis’ barrier might have held for about a day, and there probably wouldn’t have been any casualties, but if we left it alone there was a chance that a few houses would have been destroyed.”

Were Luru not here, Yuumis would have maintained the barrier over the village, and Gran would have ended up destroying them one by one, so the possibility of that happening was certainly high.

Leaving the Lupes Gigantes aside, the Cannon Apis could fly so Gran might have had quite some difficulty.

Being the case, it would probably have taken time.

In that sense, Luru was of help.

Hearing that, Medea nodded.

“I see… That’s good, then. I was worried that he caused you troubled. I wonder if he managed somehow with the martial arts he learned from Patrick…”

She tilted her head a little in confusion.

Medea didn't know exactly how powerful Luru was.

Watching his training with Patrick, she could tell that he wasn't weak, but if she actually saw a Lupes Gigantes and somebody asked her if Luru could beat that, she would only reply that it was impossible.

That's why neither Luru nor Gran mentioned his point.

Gran understood this, so he met Luru's gaze and nodded.

If you translated his nod into words, it would probably be 'It's alright, I get it. Just stay quiet.'

After that, Medea embraced Luru for a while, and perhaps because she had finally felt that he was safe, Medea noticed the girl standing next to Gran and tilted her head to the side.

"...Oh?[/Ara?] Who might you be? I've never seen you before, huh... You're not a child of this village, right?"

As though waiting for this moment, Iris stepped forward and bowed deeply. She then spoke.

"It is my pleasure to meet you, madam. My name is Iris. For certain reasons, on this occasion, I was discovered by Gran-sama and Luru-sama in the ruins, and having been asleep for a very long time, I was rescued by the two of them..."

The smoothly speaking Iris then moved onto the topic of her future.

Once again, her tone was unfaltering and filled with emotion, and Medea listened carefully to her.

About how she long ago lost somebody important, about how she pursued their killer, about how at that time she was caught in a trap and continued to sleep in the equipment in those ruins, and then about how her parents were no longer around…

After listening to all of that, Medea who had ended up completely sympathising with Iris and was moved to tears, embraced Iris and said,

"I see… So that's how it was… It must have been rough. At your age… To have no parents, or anybody to rely on… I know! You can live with us, then!"

Luru watched his mother say that, as though she had thought of a good idea.

Without bringing the topic up herself, but getting Medea to bring it up; Luru couldn't help feel shock at Iris' wiles. However, having even been invited, Iris became even more insistent.

"No, madam… It would not do to be provided even food and shelter after already having my life saved…"

Said Iris, gracefully casting her eyes down.

Perhaps because she was further moved by that act of humility, Medea brought it up with Luru.

"Not at all! Right, Luru? Luru, you want to live with Iris-chan as well, right?"

"Eh? Y-, yeah…"

The conversation was working out like he wanted, but Luru couldn't understand at all why he was the one being convinced and not the other way around.

But there wasn't anything in particular that he objected to, so he just nodded to show his approval.

"While we're at it… I know! Why not join the family as our daughter? We're lower class nobles so adopting shouldn't be difficult, and… I've wanted a daughter. Dressing up a cute girl in lots of different clothes really is a woman's romance[/ideal]. Right, let's go with that! Iris-chan, won't you become our daughter?"

"U-, umm…?"

Iris was beginning to notice Medea's increasingly threatening attitude.

That she would be allowed to stay with them was in line with Iris' plans, but Medea who was beginning to speak about adopting her and whatnot was as expected, something she hadn't imagined.

"Right! This is a good idea. It's perfect since we only have one son… so it'd be great if we had a daughter too. When Patrick comes home, I'll have a talk with him. I'm sure he'll immediately approve! You're this cute, after all!"

"M-, madam…"

Despite Iris flusteredly trying to stop her, Medea paid it no heed.

On the contrary, she placed a finger on Iris' lips and said,

“That’s not it, right? MO-THER.[/O, KA, A, SA, MA.] Okay, try saying it.”

“M-, mother[O-, Okaasama]…”

“Aahh! So cute! With this, you’re my daughter, aren’t you!~?”

Like that, Medea held Iris up in her arms and span around and around.

While looking at Luru, Iris gave him a ‘What do I do…?’ look, but he really didn’t know what to say.

When Luru shook his head, and returned a ‘Give up.’ look, Iris drooped her shoulders and resigned herself.

Watching all of this, Gran said,

“Well, didn’t everything work out happily? Though you’re a low-ranked family, becoming the daughter of a noble family isn’t something that just comes along.”

“That might be true, but…”

To Luru, the fact that he’d be living with Iris, but in a manner a little different than expected, dropped him into a truly difficult to describe emotion.

“Well, at any rate I can stop worrying about you two. I’m gunna head back to the inn. Also, tomorrow come to the inn after you’re done eating; there are things I wanna discuss with you, and things I wanna ask you,

after all. Yuumis probably does too. With little miss Iris[/ojouchan] as well, of course.”

With that, Gran gave a wave of his hand and headed towards the inn.

While still carrying Iris, to Gran who was walking away,

“For everything that happened this time, really, thank you very muchh!”

said Medea, waving at him.

Iris lay exhausted by Medea’s chest, but it was probably emotional weariness rather than physical.

But with Iris being adopted, it meant that she was now Luru’s little sister.

The daughter of his old friend, was now his little sister…

Would that make his old comrade in arms, Bacchus, his older brother or younger brother?

Thinking about this, Luru had an odd feeling about it.

“Anyway, it’s great that everything ended well, huh…”

After muttering this, Luru and the two of them returned inside the house.

Like that, their long day finally ended.

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The next morning, it seemed that Gran and Yuumis were waiting eagerly for them, for at the same time they arrived,

“You’re finally here, huh.”

said Yuumis.

Medea was affectionate with Iris so she wouldn’t let go, and as a result they ended up leaving the house quite late so it couldn’t be helped that Yuumis complained.

Yesterday, Iris was wearing an expensive black dress bestowed with concealment effects via demon technology, but because of Medea’s preferences, today she was wearing something completely opposite; brightly coloured clothes that comprised a sky-blue one-piece dress and a wide-rimmed white hat for the summer. Clothes that made her truly look like a doll.

Like that, because Iris’ appearance looked like it had been extremely thoughtfully put together, it wasn’t that the clothes didn’t suit her, but the demon race preferred black that symbolised darkness, or clothes close to that colour, and because Iris was no exception to this, she almost never wore brightly coloured clothes, and felt a little embarassed to do so.

Yuumis seemed in a bad mood when Luru first arrived at the inn, but the moment she saw Iris, it seems that all of that was blown away, and because she kept glancing at Iris and seemed like she wanted to reach out to her,

“If you want to pat her, you can just pat her.”

Said Luru.

As for Iris,

“…Is that how it is? In that case, though I don’t believe it would feel very good… please go ahead.”

she said, taking off her hat, and conscientiously presenting her head to Yuumis, so Yuumis finally began to pat her and in the end, happily had Iris sit on her lap.

Sitting opposite Luru was a hugely built man, an elf woman, and on top of that a little girl of about seven sitting on their lap.

While joking in his mind, ‘What the heck kind of family is this?’, Luru decided that for now they would get to the point.

“So? What did you want to discuss today?”

Because it looked like Yuumis was occupied with patting Iris, Luru directed the question at Gran.

“Well, I say discuss but… they’re questions, I guess. First of all, you messed with Yuumis’ barrier, right? Just where’d you learn that kind of skill?”

With those words, he immediately cut to the heart of it.

Having said that though, Luru believed that he would definitely be asked this, so he wasn't particularly shocked.

Luru replied with an answer he had calmly prepared in advance.

"I don't mind telling you, but it's an extremely important secret to me. If you want to know, then I need you two to take an oath."

Luru didn't particularly plan on lying them, or leading them astray.

There was no reason in particular to hide it, and he even thought that as long as they kept quiet, he wouldn't mind telling them everything.

He was a little worried about whether they would really stay quiet, but that too had a solution.

That's why he ended up speaking the way he did, but it seems that Yuumis was making light of Luru a little.

"I get it. I definitely won't tell anybody."

So she said, but Luru replied,

"That was a lie… I should mention this just in case, but I've cast a magic for detecting lies here. I don't mind if you lie, but I'll see through it all, you know?"

"…Eh? That's the lie, right? I don't feel any flow of mana."

Said Yuumis, looking around in shock.

“It’s the truth. Hmm… Then, I’ll ask you a few questions, so just reply; it doesn’t matter if they’re lies or truth. What’s your favourite food?”

“Meat.”

“The name of your best friend?”

“Meria.”

“If you could be reborn, what would you want to be?”

“A bird.”

“…In order, they were a lie, a lie, and the truth, right?”

Spoke Luru, slowly.

Yuumis widened her eyes in shock.

“It really is cast, huh… But it’s not like I’m planning to go spreading it around or anything, you know?”

“Even if you don’t plan on spreading it, you still plan on telling somebody, don’t you?”

“Well, yes. We’re adventurers. We have the obligation to report to the guild head.”

“I understand how you feel, but in the end, that’s still telling somebody. I said that in that case, I wouldn’t speak, right? …By the way, if you do want me to speak, I’ll be casting a contract spell. If you’re not fine with that, I have no intention of speaking.”

Seeing their back and forth, Gran spoke to Yuumis.

“See? It was your mistake to think of this guy… to think of Luru as a normal kid. Didn’t I say to think of him as an equal?”

“Isn’t that just your impression? I still had no idea what kind of person this boy was! There are things you can’t grasp without having a chat with them, you know… But, well, alright. I didn’t think that he’d even bring up contract magic. Sorry for speaking like I was testing you. I heard about yesterday from Gran, but I wanted to get to know your character a little more deeply…”

From Luru’s perception magic, it seemed that her words weren’t a lie.

“But you still want to report it, right?”

“Honestly, it’s true that it wouldn’t do to stay silent after hearing about it. However, I intended to speak about it as little as possible. Even so, the guild chief has a little authority so… if you consider the case where he decides to exercise it, I wouldn’t be able to guarantee that I’d definitely stay silent. That’s why I thought there’d be trouble in that regard… But if you don’t feel like talking, I wasn’t really going to ask you, you know? I’m interested but… I couldn’t help but feel that if I heard about how to change the magic sequence, and then reported that to the guild head, it

would just become a bothersome situation. If possible, I want to avoid situations like that, so wouldn't it be fine if I didn't hear anything? There wouldn't be anything to report."

It seemed that she was telling the truth.

"Then you won't be asking? Even though we came here already?"

"That's what the plan was, but… you can use contract magic, right? If I agree to being bound by that, won't you tell me? If I can't speak about it, then I wouldn't need to fulfil my obligation anymore, right? Wouldn't that be fine?"

"I don't think that's a good thing to do but… Gran, what about you?"

Gran nodded in reply.

"To begin with, I wasn't gunna say anything. If I was properly following the guidelines of the guild then I'd have the obligation to report, but… In the end, nothing came out of our little adventure. Wouldn't it be alright to overlook this? Moreover, there's what Yuumis reasoned out just now as well, so there's no problems, right?"

In the end, the two of them didn't intend to absolutely fulfil their obligations.

They were a really irresponsible pair that just went with the flow.

It seems that Luru's impression of them from when they just arrived in the village wasn't mistaken.

“Well, in that case… I guess I’ll speak? Iris, are you fine with it too?”

“Yes. As you desire, Luru-sama.”

And thus, Luru cast contract magic on the two of them, and began to talk.

“It is my pleasure to meet you, madam.” The word ‘madam’ here is 奥様（okusama）、and is just a way of addressing the lady/wife of the house.

/Chapter 12 END

Chapter 13 – Confession *

Though it was established that it would be fine to talk about Luru and Iris' situation, where to begin was one of the remaining problems.

It was just that Luru was of the demon race, but there was the problem of whether he should also tell them about his being the demon king.

However, he had also thought this through yesterday.

Right now, Gran and Yuumis were one of his few information sources, and they made for a good sample for finding out about the common sense of this era.

He wanted to know how normal people felt about the ancient demon race, and the demon king.

And since he cast a contract spell on Gran and Yuumis, no matter what they heard, they weren't in a position to make it public.

The two might have thought it possible to remove the spell one day, but the contract magic that Luru used was quite a strong one, so at the very least, somebody who wasn't at a level where they could easily rewrite Yuumis' barrier magic would find dispelling the contract magic more or less impossible, you could say.

And if Luru were to believe the two of them, almost nobody in this era possessed such a level of magic sequence alteration skill.

In other words, they wouldn't be able to so easily dispel Luru's magic.

On top of that, even if hypothetically they could undo the magic, even if they did reveal his past, it wouldn't really be that big a problem.

To begin with, if they went about saying that the son of a lower class noble family in a small village was the resurrected demon king from thousands of years ago, just who on earth would believe them?

It was hard to think of it as any huge problem even if they went around

spreading such a rumour.

On the contrary, it would be a bigger problem if his skill with magic was leaked out.

However, from here on, in order to protect himself, as well as in order to investigate the ancient demon race in this era, they were skills that he had no choice but to use.

It would probably be difficult to completely conceal it.

In other words, this information was something that would eventually be leaked.

Having thought like this, Luru decided that there was not a single thing about his circumstances that he needed to actively hide.

It was nothing more than some conservative thinking about not wanting to reveal it immediately after casting the magic on the pair.

Having thought that far, Luru finally opened his mouth.

"...I wonder just where I'm supposed to start? To begin with, I don't think you two will believe me, but..."

It was a preface, perhaps you could say, or some words to defend himself later, but it seemed to damage Yuumis' mood, and she said,

"You've already cast the contract magic, so just speak without reserve already. If this turns out to be nothing big, then it'll be like, 'Just what on earth were all these constraints for?', you know?"

Being told that, Luru realised that she was right, and thinking that he'd

stop with the troublesome way of speaking, he decided to just frankly state the facts.

There was also the fact that he almost completely believed in Gran and Yuumis.

Even if they'd betray him, it would only be at a forgivable level.

"Well, you're completely right, I guess. It seemed like a good idea… but I'll speak frankly. I, and Iris as well, are of the ancient demon race."

Gran and Yuumis lost their words at the truth that was spoken so frankly, as though it were nothing.

For at least a moment, the two of them probably thought that he was lying.

However, were that the case, they couldn't understand the point of Luru going as far as preparing a contract spell.

Even if they spread such a lie, nobody would believe it.

Also, thought it wasn't as though there was no possibility of this being a trap for the two of them, it was much too roundabout a method, and since he was skilled enough to create a barrier that even Yuumis couldn't escape from, harming them directly would be a quicker, and more surefire choice.

Having thought this far, there was no choice but to accept what Luru said as truth.

Coming to this conclusion in their minds, unexpectedly, the first of the two to regain their footing was Yuumis.

"…'What kind of nonsense is this?' — is probably what I should be saying, huh?"

“I wonder about that. Honestly, I don’t have much common sense, you see… Iris as well. Neither of us can accurate grasp just how rare an existence the ancient demon race is, or how they’re viewed. That’s why I can’t even imagine what a normal reaction would be… But from what I can see about your reactions at least, it seems that just like the book I read, we demons seem to have become almost legendary or something, huh…”

To Luru who said as such, Yuumis jumped up and said,

“Obviously! Something like the ancient demon race… This is coming from someone researching it like me, but it’s a world of lies, fakes and delusions you know!? For something like that… to be before your eyes… Even if you said that, nobody would believe you, you know… To begin with, just how on earth can you prove this?”

“If you say that I’ll be… troubled, but for proof… at the least, the reason Iris and I could alter your barrier spell was because of that. It’s not something that anybody can easily do, right?”

Being told that, it seems like Yuumis’ words were stuck in her throat because she just muttered, ‘Uu…’ and sat back down again.

It probably hit where it hurt.

Yuumis’ skill was a certainty.

From Luru’s point of view, there was nothing but a feeling of oddness about the fact that despite her skill in magecraft, her ability in magic sequence alteration was so low.

It was because of this that Luru supposed that the technique he used basically didn’t exist in this era, and thus he said what he did.

After that, having watched Luru and Yuumi's discussion and seemingly coming back to himself, Gran began asking questions in an apologetic and timid manner unsuited to his large build.

"I'd thought that you weren't a normal kid, but for you to be an ancient demon… But in that case, ain't it weird? For starters, your parents are definitely nobles of this nation. They have a recorded family tree, and you can easily guess that there weren't any ancient demons or anything in those records. But despite that, you say that you're an ancient demon? As for Iris-jouchan, she was sleeping in those ruins. Because of that, it's not like I can't imagine it but…"

It was a completely justified doubt.

But there was the question of whether a human could understand the explanation.

The idea of reincarnation was a concept endemic to the demon race.

However, having throught that far, Luru remembered — 'Come to think of it…'

"Ah, right. A while ago, I asked Yuumis about what she wanted to become if she could be reborn, right?"

"…? Yeah. I wanted to become a bird. What about it?"

"You understand the concept of rebirth?"

"Well, yes. I do. It's when the soul transmigrates, isn't it? It's romantic, right?"

At Yuumis who seemed like she was dreaming of something a little as she replied, Luru and Iris received a huge shock.

"Luru-sama… Just what does this mean?"

"I don't know either but… it seems that she really does understand, huh…"

Yuumis wasn't a human, but an elf. However, even so, in the past, such words coming out of an elven mouth was impossible.

The concept of reincarnation was endemic to the demon race; a religious faith.

The demon race had in the past, been dealt defeat.

This being the case, the religion of the current era should have been unified, and the likes of the ancient demon faith should have been consigned to the dark oblivion of history, but it seems that at the very least, the idea of reincarnation remained.

Religion was quite lacking in the village, so there were no establishments of the church there meaning that Luru hadn't thought very deeply about it, but Luru now realised that it was something he needed to investigate.

Having said that though, right now this wasn't what they were supposed to be talking about.

They were discussing Luru's identity.

Getting back on topic, Luru continued.

"Well… If you understand the concept of reincarnation, then this makes things a lot quicker. I'm not an ancient demon, per se, but somebody reborn from an ancient demon into a human. That's why my body is that

of a genuine human, and my parents are both humans as well.”

“Re-, -born… So there really was rebirth after all…!”

“It wasn’t a lie, huh…? There’s still something after death, huh…”

Both Yuumis and Gran’s eyes were widened in shock.

Luru understood their feelings quite well.

In truth, even Luru and Iris who were of a faith that believed in this couldn’t hide their shock when it happened to Luru himself.

Luru continued in a way that didn’t interrupt them.

“It’s not a lie. The reason being that I died in my previous life. Iris can attest to the fact that there’s no mistaking that. In truth, Iris and I were originally acquaintances. And for some reason I don’t know, the two of us reunited in this era… Ahh, it’s not as though I stuffed her in there, by the way. It was all just coincidence…”

“Meaning… Hang on. Was the explanation you gave me in the ruins a lie, then?”

Gran looked at Iris a little accusingly.

From the point of view of Gran who had sympathised with her, if it really were a lie, it was something he felt a little sad.

However, Iris shook her head.

“No. Not a single thing was a lie.”

“Then what does this mean?”

“In the past, I lost a very important person to me… That person was the very personage sitting right here, Luru-sama.”

“…That’s…”

“In the past, because Luru-sama was the very good friend of my father, he was kind even to me. Luru-sama was a personage who should have been busy enough that they had no time to spare on the likes of a child like me, but despite this, he came to visit me in various ways… On my birthday, he would unfailing come with a present in hand to celebrate, and would play with me very much. Because of this… it did not take very long for me to develop a deep, deep affection for Luru-sama.”

Having said all of that in a breath, Iris cut off her words temporarily.

And then suddenly looking into space as though she was recalling something, her eyebrows knit into a sad expression, and she began to continue speaking.

“However, in those days… it was a chaotic era of war. Absolutely no one could escape from the fighting, and Luru-sama was a personage who was constantly in the centre of it. On the eve of my seventh birthday… Luru-sama… was killed. As Luru-sama was, as I stated a moment ago, constantly in the middle of the war. From when I was very little, I had prepared myself for the fact that something like this might one day happen. However, the way he died was much too grand… so not a single one of we retainers could see him off when he passed…”

Gnawing on her lip, Iris continued.

The next expression on her face was wrath.

“I felt regret. I felt mortified… So I decided on revenge. Not against the ones that killed him… But against the world that killed him, I would raise a beacon of rebellion, I thought. I would crush war, and the reasons that caused it, as a memorial service for Luru-sama, I thought. However… In the end, my determination came to an end halfway. Along the way, I was kidnapped by an unknown somebody, and was thrown into the equipment in those ruins… After that, it is as you know, Gran-sama. I saw you and Luru-sama, and in my half-awoken daze, I immediately attacked you as well… and like that, we arrive at this point.”

Once she reached the end of what she wanted to say, Iris returned to her normal calm expression.

Hearing that, Gran made a difficult expression,

“You had those kind of circumstances… Sorry, for doubting you…”

and apologised.

As for Iris, she replied,

“No. What I said to you in the ruins was not a lie, but… neither was it accurate. And the intent was to conceal the truth. That I was doubted was a matter of course. On the contrary, I would like to thank you for forgiving me…”

“It’s fine. Don’t worry… I get it now… But leaving Luru aside, Iris-chan… just how old are you? You didn’t reincarnate or anything, right?”

It was something that was on Luru's mind as well.

Before Luru died, certainly she was a girl who was intelligent beyond her age, but he had no memories of it being to this extent.

Iris thought about it for a little, and spoke.

"…When Luru-sama passed away, I was seven years old. I went about fighting on the battlefield for roughly another five years, so… that makes me 12. In regards to my appearance, because of the ancient demon race's special trait… my growth is just a little slow."

12 years old.

When Luru thought about the fact that this girl fought for 5 years after that, he didn't know what to say about the trouble he had put her through.

However, he thought that having said that, apologising might be the wrong thing to do.

This girl didn't wish for an apology.

Not an apology, but instead facing forward, and thinking about what to do from now on, would surely make her happier.

Thinking this, Luru decided to risk not apologising.

However, though it was the truth that the ancient demon race grew slower, even that had its limits.

In particular, up until they matured as an adult, the grow of the ancient demon race was not all that slow compared to humans.

In that case, Iris' growth was…

Thinking that far, Iris noticed Luru's gaze, and looking down at her own

body sadly, she sighed and said,

"...I am still twelve, and there remains the possibility of growth..."

She muttered, looking down with her cheeks dyed red in embarrassment, Luru felt that it would be pitiful for him to consider this any further, and decided to stop.

Seeing Iris act like that, the heavy atmosphere lightened just a little, and Gran opened his mouth.

"...Got it. Still, for your age you're quite the clever little miss[/jouchan], aren't ya? Are all ancient demons like this?"

Luru replied to Gran's question.

"No, I think Iris is special. The others weren't any different to humans. There was a considerable difference to humans in their control of mana but... there wasn't much difference on the inside."

"Heh[/I see]... I had absolutely no idea I'd ever hear something like that from an ancient demon themself though. Hearing this, it seems ridiculous that they're called a legendary race or whatever."

Said Gran, seeming to have come to some conclusion — about the fact that Iris and Luru were of the ancient demon race, as well as what they spoke about just now.

You could say that a magnanimous person referred to this type of man.

Yuumis was a little different, and perhaps because she finally digested that Luru and Iris were ancient demons, it looked like she was little by little becoming excited.

Though you could say it was a just hobby, the things she had been pursuing for a long time were now before her eyes.

Her joy was probably immeasurable.

Moreover, it seems that Yuumis had picked up on a word that she couldn't overlook.

"That you two are ancient demons… is something I understand now… But just a moment ago, there was something that Iris-chan said that I haven't been able to forget about, you see."

"My…! Just what did I say?"

Iris tilted her head to the side.

Yuumis then spoke.

"You said it, you know… 'Retainer' or something… Luru is an ancient demon, and you are too, Iris-chan. I'm fine with the story up to there. But… just what kind of position did Luru hold? Your words sounded almost as if you were serving him… If you mention an ancient demon… who was served by other ancient demons…"

From her manner of speech, Yuumis had probably more or less guessed at the truth.

However, she wasn't convinced about it, and it was nothing more than a thought that she had come up with.

And then, Luru already had no real reason to hide it.

That's why he spoke frankly.

"Yeah, you're right… In the past, I was the one who the ancient demons followed… The one who led all of the demon race into battle… In my past life, I was——"

————The 100th Demon King Luruslia Nord.

そのもの; 'that thing in and of itself', 'per se', 'the very thing'

/Chapter 13 END

Chapter 14 – Conditions and Prospects ∗

“D-, Demon King…!?”

It seems that when people reached the summit of shock, they became unable to properly speak words.

To Yuumis who flapped her mouth about, seemingly wanting to say something, but unable to get the words out, Luru continued to speak.

“Now this has no proof. All of it is just my own assertion. That’s why it doesn’t matter if you believe me or not. The important part is that Iris and I were ancient demons, and the part about me being a demon king doesn’t really have meaning…”

However, it seems that Yuumis had a different view.

“What are you saying!? It’s super important! Demon King… Was Luru really the Demon King? Iris-chan…”

Said Yuumis, looking to Iris for confirmation.

As for Iris, she spoke about Luru’s past glory as though seeing a dream, so it seemed that Yuumis completely believed her.

After that, Yuumis began to ask various questions about the ancient demon race, so seeing this, Gran sighed.

“…Well, once Yuumis becomes like that, there’s no managing her. Let’s leave them alone for a while… Hey, Luru. I was surprised about you being the demon king in the past, but… why’d you tell us? The thing about you

being an ancient demon as well. Just what do you mean by telling us all this?"

If you had to say, between Yuumis and Gran, it felt like Yuumis bore more of the intellectual jobs whilst Gran carried more of the muscle, but it seems that feeling was a little off.

Gran's question was extremely composed, and extremely sharp, thought Luru.

It might have been unmistakable that the more knowledgeable of the two was Yuumis, but the one who skilfully held the reins of the party and led it in the right direction might have on the contrary been Gran.

Up until now, Luru had never seen Gran become particularly agitated.

He was the type of warrior who was always thinking, and even in battle he didn't stop.

If you considered that Yuumis was on the contrary a whimsical person who went with their feelings, then the two of them fit quite well together as a pair.

As for how to answer, Luru wasn't worried about it.

There was no reason for him to hide anything, and it was also for the sake of keeping good relations with Gran and Yuumis from here on out.

A person who travelled across the world and saw many things with their own eyes was in a sense, a hard to find existence for Luru, and on top of that if their personalities were good, it became extremely obvious that they people that Luru didn't want to cut ties with.

That's why Luru answered Gran frankly.

"It's not really anything too difficult... I wanted to reveal myself and get along better with you two. I... am certainly an ancient demon, a demon

king reborn, so I hold a mentality that doesn't match with my age, but my position in society is still a seven year old child, and there isn't a lot that I can do. I like to think that the magecraft training I've been doing up until now has been okay, but even so, there's still a long way to go. And my parents have raised me up until now and lived with me. I love them too. And I don't hate the village. On the contrary, I like it… This kind of peaceful scenery was something that I could have never seen in my previous life, even up to my death, you see. In a sense, my lifestyle right now is basically the dreams I had in the old days, made reality. That's why… leaving the village immediately isn't really an option for me."

Having spoken that far, Gran seemed to have guessed his intentions as well.

Digesting Luru's words, and then after thinking for a little while, Gran spoke his guess.

"In other words… You want us to act as your window to the outside? That's what you want from us?"

His guess was correct.

Truly, this role was what Luru was hoping from them.

However, it wasn't something as cold as the way Gran said it, and Luru wasn't coldly and calmly seeking this from them.

"More than windows… It's more like, on the level that I'd like it if you guys occasionally came to the village, and just talked to us about the outside. Since we explored the ruins together, I know what kind of person you are. More than anything, you guys are skilled adventurers. The city is for sure, but you've been to other countries as well, right? I don't feel like leaving the village. But I want to know about the world. I want to search

places like the ruin that was near the village… That's why, for that, I want information."

Listening to Luru's words, Gran scratched his head and replied.

"You're expecting quite a lot from us but… There's heaps of stuff that we don't know, and our knowledge isn't that plentiful, yanno?"

His words sounded like a refusal, but you could tell from his expression that it wasn't so.

His smile seemed to say, 'My, my…[/yareyare]' after all.

"Just that is fine… It's not like I was hoping for expert level information. I'd be happy just to hear about general knowledge, or the feel of different regions, broad things of that kind of level. In other words, the stuff that you talked about the other day in the bar. …More than anything, I want to talk to you guys occasionally. Is that no good?"

It was close to an entreaty, but it wasn't as though there wasn't that kind of reason as well.

The village had very few stimuli.

Just having adventurers come on occasion could make the village lively.

The bar was like that, and children like Rusty were like that as well.

He was also thinking that it'd be nice if they dropped in by the village on occasion, even if there wasn't anything to do.

Perhaps understanding what Luru wanted to say, Gran replied.

“It’s not like we can’t, but… Geez, you’re being quite straight with me, aren’t cha? If it’s just that much, it’s fine… Or so I’d like to say, but…”

Contrary to expectations, Gran’s words stopped.

Luru tilted his head in confusion.

“But?”

After that, Gran held up a finger and continued.

“We’re adventurers. We can’t just come down here that often. Moreover, coming down here just to talk with no reward at all is, you know? So… I’m thinking of giving you conditions.”

“Conditions?”

While questioning just what kind of conditions Gran could make him swallow, Luru decided to listen for now.

Compared to his time as the demon king, right now he had few fetters of obligations.

As long as it wasn’t anything crazy, he was fine with one or two conditions.

Gran spoke.

“Yeah, conditions… Won’t you enter my clan?”

Clan.

In the adventurers guild, it was one of the types of groupings of adventurers.

Unlike parties, clans had the point of being quite large scale organisations.

Put simply, it was said to be a grouping of a number of parties, and entering one bestowed various benefits.

For example, clans based around people from the same birthplace[/homeland] would proactively take in novice adventurers, and drive knowledge and skills into them to guide them into being full-fledged adventurers existed, and because these were useful to the guild as well, they were acknowledged by the guild.

In the past the guild didn't have this sort of system, and had nothing but parties, but in those days, it seems the death rate of beginners was a lot higher.

As expected, inheriting skills from experts was something incredibly important.

That's why being invited into a clan by Gran wasn't really something you could call a condition.

On the contrary, it was a benefit.

Being invited into the clan was the same as being asked to become an adventurer, but to begin with, Luru was planning to becoming one in the future so he was fine with that.

And he knew that clans weren't something that strongly compelled you to do anything, so there was no problem with that either.

However, as for the one problem that did exist…

"Gran. I said so earlier, but I'll be staying in the village for a while. As for

registering to become an adventurer, no matter how strong a backer I may have, I shouldn't be able to do it if I'm below 14. That's why…"

Gran nodded at Luru's answer.

"Yeah. I know. That's why this is for when you turn 14. …Well, having said that though, right now Yuumis and I aren't in a guild, though."

"…Oi, then whose clan am I supposed to join?"

"It's like that. Before you turn 14, we'll create one… How's that?"

Asked Gran, with a smile.

To Luru, if they were willing to be that accommodating, he had no reason to refuse.

Saying that they'd go out of their way to create a clan meant that they probably weren't thinking of tying him down.

Were this a party invitation, Luru wouldn't be able to move about as freely. Parties had quite some obligations.

However, a clan didn't have such bindings. When all was said and done, they were just mutual aid organisations, and there was fundamentally nothing that bound the people associated with a clan.

That's why Luru decided to nod.

To implement this he would have to work out various problems, but to begin with, they were problems that he would have to work out anyway.

"Alright then… When I become 14 and I register as an adventurer… I'll

enter you and Yuumis' clan. That's as the condition for you two to periodically visit the village…"

When Luru said this, Gran smiled and held out his hand.

It was a handshake.

Luru firmly grabbed back at that large hand, and smiled.

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After that, the villagers held a huge farewell party at the bar for Yuumis and Gran, and after drinking lots, they departed for the city that served as their base.

They were a pair that came and left like a storm, but also a pair that helped Luru gain a number of things.

"Well then, I'll be looking forward to seven years from now!"

"After getting back, establishing a clan… Just when did this get decided…? Well, whatever. Seven years later we'll have such a super huge clan that it'll shock you senseless! Next time it's our turn to surprise you! Well… Until then though, we're planning on coming here once in a while…"

Saying that, the two of them headed away from the village.

You could say that they were looking forward to what the future actually held.

The promise was between Luru and Gran, but it seems that Iris completely intended to come along.

“In seven years, we will be adventurers, won’t we, Ojisama!”

She said.

In fact, Iris’ skill was more than enough, but Luru was still unsure about bringing Iris somewhere dangerous.

However, Iris was also an ancient demon.

Though she was a girl, to she who was a soldier who lived through that era of war, Luru thought that worrying about this was a little rude, and decided to stop overworrying.

After this, the problem that remained was explaining to his parents but…

His family being a noble family meant that there were troublesome parts that came with it, and honestly he was worried about how to break the topic to them.

However, when he spoke about this worry,

“If you ask honestly, I don’t think there will be a problem, but…”

Iris said.

According to her, their mother Medea had noticed that Luru was thinking of one day leaving the village, so perhaps she would give him permission to leave.

Certainly that made sense but… he didn’t know how it would go in

reality.

He felt at least a little anxious about it.

However, if he didn't speak about it, nothing could begin.

Luru nodded at Iris' words in agreement, and decided to just ask honestly.

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Luru's worries turned out to be needless.

As for when he realised this, it started when he timidly said to Medea,

"I want to become an adventurer when I turn 14."

and with an expression that seemed like he was saying the obvious, she replied,

"Eh? I know that. You're going to leave the village, right? Or rather, that's quite late, isn't it…?"

It was around this time that he realised it.

When he asked about her response in more detail, Medea said that she noticed that since Luru had been aware of things, he would look off into the distance somewhere with eyes of longing, so she thought that he would probably leave the village, and would one day speak to her about this.

However, she had expected it to be earlier… That's why rather than 14, she thought that it wouldn't be odd if he said he wanted leave at 10 – no, even at 7, which is why when she realised that she would have another 7 whole years with him, on the contrary it made her happy, she said.

Rather than eyes of longing, it was eyes of reminiscence, and rather than looking off into the distance, he was recalling the days that became history that he could never get back, but there was no way his mother could know that.

In the end, however, the result of this was that her guess was surprisingly accurate.

Luru felt it was good luck that things were progressing in a better direction, and more tidily so, than he had expected.

Iris also told their mother that she would be tagging along, and as expected, Medea had already thought it would happen.

Or rather, Iris was constantly following Luru around, so on the contrary you could even say it was to be expected.

When she was asked what she felt about this impression,

"It is my honour!"

she said, and Luru felt that it was already past the point of being able to do anything about it.

Not that he wanted to stop it to begin with, though.

And like that, the path to being an adventurer steadily unfolded before Luru and Iris, when suddenly Medea muttered something worrying.

“…I’m fine with it, but Patrick is… you know? …I wonder if it’ll be alright.”

His mother was a broadminded person.

That’s why she easily accepted it.

However, it might have been risky to think that his father would do the same.

His father was by no means a stern type, and though he was strict when it came to swordsmanship, he was ordinarily a gentle and kind person.

However, within that gentleness lay a strong and intense person… In other words, he was a person that became scary when angered.

In the end, would this type of father readily accept them leaving the house at 14?

He wasn’t that difficult of a person, but he was the type that couldn’t just say “Sure”.

Once he voiced this prediction to his mother as well,

“Well… Right, when it comes down to it, what if you settled it with a fight? If it’s Patrick, then he’d allow it if he lost, you know?”

she said with a smile.

It was most reasonable.

His father was extremely strict when it came to swordsmanship.

And his attitude towards swordsmanship was extremely earnest.

That's why if he tasted defeat in that kind of fight, it was thinkable that he would listen to the victor as a good sport.

However, the problem was that Patrick was quite strong.

Of course, if Luru used all of his mana, as well as the swordsmanship he had learned as a demon, he could probably win.

However, a match with Patrick was fundamentally one that used the Orthodox Swordsmanship of the kingdom.

They were rules that Patrick came up with at the start for the sake of their mastery of the Orthodox Style, so it wouldn't be forgivable to break them.

When it came to Patrick, he had to hold back the mana in his body, and fight with the mana volume and strength of a seven year old.

To Luru as well, it was obvious to fight with Patrick in a fair and square match.

When he thought this, all he felt was that he was at a severe disadvantage in a fight against Patrick.

It was probably that 9 times out of 10, he wouldn't be able to win.

However, even so, Luru had no choice but to win.

Imagining the time of the fight, Luru sighed.

/Chapter 14 END

Chapter 15 – Father's Homecoming *

It was two weeks after that when Luru's father returned home.

Around noon when the sun was high, his father who was riding a carriage from the neighbouring town was wearing neither sword nor armour, and was lightly dressed like any old villager so from a glance you could not really tell that he was a skilled swordsman.

He had a gentle and calm atmosphere, and in his luggage were a number of heavy books, and even now was reading while wearing the Magus Tool that he always put on when he did so. Because of that, rather than a knight, he seemed more like a scholar.

Alighting from the horse carriage left at the entrance of the village, with a few books and a large-ish bag, he noticed Luru who had come to meet him and leisurely waved his hand.

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"Hey… It's been a while, huh, Luru. Have you been well?"

His father spoke in a kind tone, befitting of his appearance, and though it wasn't as though they hadn't met in years, Luru thought that it was something he missed.

"Yeah, I've been well… It's been a while. Will you be able to stay a bit longer this time?"

His father, Patrick, worked in the royal palace in the royal capital, so he didn't have that much leave. That's why Luru asked what he did.

Normally his family should have been living together in the capital, but his mother took a liking to this village, and his father didn't want to take Luru and his mother to the capital either.

It seems that his mother had lived in the capital in the past, but after marrying with his father they came to this village, and she had lived here ever since.

Perhaps it was because the two of them didn't like metropolises, or perhaps there was some other reason they didn't mention so Luru didn't know, but anyway, because of their circumstances, Luru hadn't been to a large city yet.

"Let's see… This time… I don't think I can stay for too long either. Though it's not like I have to go back immediately either. So there's enough time to train you and Rusty."

Said Patrick with a smile.

Each time Patrick came home, he would teach Luru and Rusty.

There were quite a few people who had learned swordsmanship in the village, but the only one who was skilled enough to teach people properly was Patrick.

Because of that, he would often teach the children of the village swordsmanship when he came home.

While he was in the village, Patrick was completely on holiday without anything else to do, so he had a lot of free time.

Having said that though, there was no way that a knight could let his skill decline, so he trained in the sword every single day, and it seems that the children who saw him do so asked him to teach them, and that

was how it began.

There were a few children who learned under Patrick, left the village, and became adventurers, and Rusty was working hard to be the same.

"I think Rusty's burning up this time. He's probably frantically trying his best, so… could you tell him not to overdo it?"

"Mn? Did something happen to him?"

"We'll tell you about that later… There are a whole bunch of things we have to tell you, after all."

"I see… Speaking of which, where's Medea?"

"Ah, she's inside making lunch with Iris. We didn't know when your carriage would arrive, but she was here up until just a moment ago."

Saying that, Patrick nodded with a 'hmm'.

"Iris huh? I read the letter but, adopting her, huh? The letter wasn't detailed, but just why are we adopting somebody…?"

He was probably talking about a letter that Medea sent.

It was a letter that she sent regularly, that detailed the things that happened in the village, and the conditions of the family and estate.

It took a week at the least to reach the capital, but it seems that this time it had arrived relatively quickly.

But even so, it seems that she hadn't had time to write about it in detail.

"Iris herself said that she'd be fine being a maid but… Mum[Okaasan], you know…?"

Luru's tone suggested that he had some things he wanted to say about it, so Patrick made an astonished expression.

However, it seems that he wasn't exactly against it, and asked Luru a question.

"Medea is being unreasonable again, huh… Well, that's fine though. Are you all right with it as well, Luru?"

He was probably indirectly asking to see if Luru was in shock about a stranger suddenly becoming family.

From Patrick's point of view, Luru was a small child.

It was obvious concern for him.

However, that was completely off the mark.

Iris was the daughter of somebody who had been like his family since long ago, and as for Luru himself, he had built up a bold enough personality in his previous life that he would be fine with living with a stranger.

That's why there was no issue at all.

"I don't mind at all. Iris is polite, and a good girl…"

It seems that Patrick felt something other than just simple approval

from Luru's manner of speech, so he stroked his chin and said, with his glasses glittering,

"My, my... Your girlfriend?"

Mixed into his words were a bit of teasing.

It was a bit of bonding between parent and child.

However, Luru had already passed the age at which he'd be taken in by such teasing in his previous life, and so it probably couldn't be helped that he just replied in an astonished tone,

"A person who's going to be my younger or older sister from now on isn't somebody I'd be thinking of making into a girlfriend, right...?"

Not only that, but speaking frankly, she was the daughter of his friend.

The mental hurdle for making her his girlfriend was much too high.

However, Patrick rebutted with a reasonable argument.

"Marriage between non-blood related siblings is not forbidden by law, you know. Well, in those cases they become the adopted daughter of somebody else in name, though."

It was the truth.

This was written clearly in the laws of the kingdom's charter.

However, that wasn't the problem.

That's why Luru said,

“It’s not a matter of legality…”

And after all of this, seeing that Luru didn’t seem to be thinking of her romantically at all, perhaps Patrick finally understood because he said,

“Hm… From what I can see, the possibility is low, huh? It feels like you really see her as your little sister…”

They were some oddly sharp and insightful words.

After that, Luru took a few books off Patrick’s hands, and started walking towards the Cadisnola residence.

Patrick followed after him, and after a while, they arrived at their home.

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When they arrived at home, Medea and Iris, as well as a maid, were awaiting Patrick.

Patrick greeted them one by one, and hugged them.

The maid as well.

Was it because he was a lower class noble, or was it just unique to him? Luru didn’t know because he hadn’t really met any other nobles, but Patrick treated people without much distinction, and he was social and open with both the villages and the maids.

It was enough that he even said it was fine to address him without honorifics.

If he took a step in the wrong direction, it would end up as a

personality that was unbefitting of a noble, but the villagers were careful, and around people from other villages or travellers, they would properly attach '-sama' to his name, so there wasn't much to worry about.

There was something to worry about when it came to children, but to begin with, not many people came to the village, so for now there didn't seem to be anything that would cause trouble.

After that, Patrick organised his luggage and left them in his room, and gave Luru a few books that he had brought with him.

Each time Patrick came back from the capital, he would bring Luru books as souvenirs like this.

Luru remembered that when he asked Patrick why he brought these even though books were expensive, Patrick had replied that he had a friend with a large book collection, and because that friend often bought books, he could get them at a cheaper price.

Perhaps because they were obtained through that channel, they were slightly old editions and sometimes pages would be missing, but even so it was a good source of information, and was no problem to Luru.

Whilst eating the lunch that Medea and Iris had made, everybody sat together and chatted.

Patrick knew a lot, so he would speak about the conditions of the capital, but the contents were simplified things that a child of Luru's age could understand, so even the detailed conversations were appropriate for a child of his age, and it seemed difficult to talk about things beyond this, so Luru felt that he was lacking information.

This was why he wanted to do the deal with Gran and Yuumis, and while thinking that it really was a good idea, Luru had a chat with his father for the first time in a while.

The conversations he had with his father had interesting contents, but as expected, it was quite different from the perspective of an adventurer, and though he could grasp the atmosphere of the capital from it, his father didn't often speak of things like international relations.

Even when he did talk about it on occasion, they were mostly rumours or very general information, and rather than seeing these things himself, they were things he heard from others or knowledge he had learned from books.

The reason he didn't speak about things in detail was because Luru had the appearance of a seven year old, so it might have been inevitable, but as expected, Luru felt a little disappointed about this.

Unlike adventurers, Patrick couldn't just freely cross over to other countries, and as a knight who had sworn allegiance to the kingdom, he couldn't touch on subjects that were classified and wouldn't thoughtlessly speak about these things.

So in general, you could say that his father had the exact opposite character of carefree adventurers.

While they were having their meal, Patrick heard from Medea once again about adopting Iris, and readily agreed with a nod.

It was likely that after having a chat with Iris and making sure there was nothing wrong with her character, he judged that there were no problems.

As for the paperwork, they decided to have him hand in the forms when he returned to the capital.

The story about how the adventurers came to the village also came up.

While talking about that, Medea told Patrick about how Luru went to the ruins, but he wasn't that angry, and it ended with him telling Luru not to try anything excessive.

And then, the most important topic came up.

Luru quietly began to talk.

"Also… Dad[/Tousan]. There's something I need to talk about."

It seems that Patrick sensed that something was up about Luru's formal attitude, for his cheerful smile turned into a serious expression as he watched Luru.

"What is it?"

"I want to become an adventurer when I turn 14… Would that be alright?"

Without any pretences, Luru immediately cut to the point, and Patrick smiled at that.

"…That's fine. Though we're lower class, we're still nobles so it isn't as though there aren't problems, but… That can just be solved by adopting a son from a relative. We're still young too, so there's the possibility of having a younger brother for you. But… Luru."

When Luru was wondering if Patrick would accept without issue, Patrick's words trailed off, and Luru's was not so bad at guessing that he

couldn’t tell what Patrick wanted to say.

Luru slowly nodded, and waited for his father’s words.

“Yeah.”

“The adventurer occupation is easier said than done. So I’m thinking of giving you a challenge to complete.”

“A… challenge, huh…?”

Just what kind of challenge would Patrick be giving him?

Luru could somehow guess.

While his father was gentle, his real character was that of a knight.

A challenge that a knight would give.

It went without saying.

Patrick spoke.

“Yes… Until your fourteenth birthday, you have to get me to acknowledge your swordsmanship. If you can’t do that, even if you become an adventurer, you’ll just die, you see… Is that fine?”

Having said that, Patrick’s eyes blazed and housed a strong will different to the kind smile up until now.

Luru could feel an intensity from Patrick that was in no way inferior to the warriors that challenged him back when he was a demon king.

So Luru answered.

He understood that he couldn't refuse; it was the same both today, and in the past.

"Yeah… I got it. Until my fourteenth birthday, I'll show you that I can become a swordsman you can acknowledge, Dad[/Tousan]."

Whilst receiving Patrick's intensity, Luru declared this without hesitation, and Patrick smiled once again.

However, that smile was as expected not his gentle one… but the very smile that a warrior gave having found a worthy opponent.

"As expected of my son. Now then, since that's decided, it'll be special training for you tomorrow, okay? I have confidence that you'll become stronger."

Having said that, his father's expression returned to normal.

In the end, could Luru become strong enough to defeat Patrick?

Patrick was strong.

He was certainly not this country's strongest, but his skill was guaranteed.

Why?

It was because his occupation was none other than the sword instructor of the Royal Knight Order, known as the strongest in the country.

If you wanted the Kingdom of Lezaad's strongest, you would normally say it was the Head Knight of the Royal Knight Order, or the Head

Magician of the court mages.

However, in swordsmanship alone, there was probably nobody in the country who could beat Patrick.

In swordsmanship, his talent was beyond a level that anybody could follow.

His strength was enough that you could declare this.

Sensing that he could become an adventurer with a normal level of determination, he quickly tidied the lunch table, and headed to the garden with a wooden practice sword in hand.

From now on, each day would be intense training.

Otherwise, something like beating Patrick would be beyond a dream.

So Luru thought.

TL Notes:

Patrick uses 'boku'（僕）to refer to himself which is both humble, and not so formal. I suppose it's to highlight his soft and gentle atmosphere.

'Whilst receiving Patrick's intensity' 威迫 means 'making somebody obey by threat, by showing your power'. So it means 'threat' if translated, but it's not really the threat you'd normally think of（脅迫）so I did it as 'intensity'.

Whilst being forced accepting Patrick's terms (because of his intensity)

‘beyond a dream‘ 夢のまた夢 means ‘a dream within a dream’. So like, a super far-fetched dream. Beyond your wildest dreams. An empty dream. That kind of thing.

/Chapter 15 END

Chapter 16 – Battle, and Then Conclusion *

The wind rang out as it blew across the meadow.

There stood two men, and watching those two was a young woman and a girl who looked of about 16.

The two women both possessed radiantly beautiful faces, and if you described the young woman as somebody who possessed a bewitching beauty, then the younger could be described as a single, graceful flower in the moonlight.

However, they weren't the lead actors of this scene.

Instead, the ones who held the lead role were the two men with swords a certain distance away from them, facing each other down.

The two of them had fairly similar looks with intellectual and calm eyes, and were almost like mirror images of each other.

However, if you had to say what was different, one of them was a boy who had not reached 15 yet, whilst the other was a man in his mid-thirties.

Furthermore, their hair colour was different.

Whilst the boy's hair was an inky black that housed a deep darkness, the man's hair was a blonde that glittered in the light of the sun.

The quality of their hair was quite similar; both soft-looking, and cut just above their shoulders.

Having examined thus far, the fact that they were parent and child

became obvious.

In other words, the boy's hair colour was inherited from the woman standing there, and the characteristics and quality of his hair were inherited from the father standing opposite him.

"...I've waited impatiently for this day."

The boy————Luru, was talking to his father about how today was the day of the promise.

A long time had passed since the day they made the promise seven years earlier, and today was the day when he became a year older and turned 14.

In other words, it was the day that Luru's dream would be realised.

For the sake of that dream, the man in front of his eyes, Patrick, was a wall that he had no choice but to surmount.

"Me too, Luru. You've become strong... Your body, and your heart too can't even be compared with seven years ago. I'm sure that today you'll surpass me... That's your plan, right? "

Whilst saying that, Patrick's eyes housed a passion that showed absolutely no intention of losing.

Luru knew that Patrick wasn't the type to lose intentionally as a parting gift to his son, but even so, seeing the state Patrick was in with his own eyes made him feel just a little nervous.

He looked straight at Patrick.

Seven years had passed since then, and even though Patrick should have aged too, not even a shadow of it could be seen from his appearance.

Because he had a gentle and calm atmosphere to begin with, and he actually often seemed a little older than his age, but because he hadn't changed much, on the contrary, these days he often seemed younger.

His body was just as robust as back in those days, and Luru knew that just below his loose clothes were muscles that had been trained to the limit.

He was the opponent that he trained together with day after day.

You could say that they knew each other's habits, each other's strengths; everything.

The problem was clearly that the father had trained his skills to a higher level, and Luru couldn't even beat him in pure arm strength, but the problem of skill aside, at least for this match, the issue of arm strength would not be a problem.

If Luru ran his huge reserves of mana to use for Body Reinforcement, he could probably win via brute force. However, as long as he had chosen not to do so and participated in a match of pure swordsmanship then Luru wouldn't be using that mana. His father though, also suggested suppressing his own superior arm strength.

It wasn't Luru's suggestion, but in the end this match was just to determine whether or not Luru had properly learned the sword, so Patrick using brute force to win was pointless, and neither would Patrick find it enjoyable that way.

And Luru felt more or less the same.

To Luru, if he used his mana freely then he could suppress Patrick via brute force without caring about swordsmanship or anything like that.

However, doing so in this match would be classless, and to begin with, doing so would have rendered his training under Patrick as meaningless.

Luru learned his era's swordsmanship so that the power that he wielded in the past as the demon king could be allocated to the position of a trump card.

But if despite that, during the final test when he would find out if he had properly learned this or not, if he started to freely use other techniques in the battle with Patrick, the test would have very little meaning to Luru.

That's why the result was that Luru restrained his mana, his father wore a Magus Tool on his finger to decrease his physical strength, and hoped for the fair fight that this was going to be.

Before the battle, they had adjusted the Magus Tool while arm wrestling to balance the power, and right now their arm strength was certainly equal.

After this, all that was left was a battle of skills.

His father had a slight handicap due to being unused to the feeling of his weakened body, but to begin with, his father had the advantage in modern swordsmanship.

On top of that, this battle was something they had decided beforehand, so his father had practised his swordsmanship under weakened physical conditions until he could fight without a problem in expectation of this.

You could consider it as almost equal.

Having thought that far, Luru drew his sword, and took a guard.

“Of course… I’ll definitely surpass you. And when I do, the next instructor for the Royal Knight Order will be me.”

Patrick laughed at Luru’s joke.

“I’m surprised that something like that came out of your mouth… I thought that you’d definitely throw away your position as a noble, you know. If you intend on succeeding me, and I don’t have to worry about adopting somebody or giving you a younger brother, then that’s fine too, though… Well, that’s for later though. Right now I can’t hand my position over yet. After all, I have a wife I need to support.”

What came from Patrick’s mouth was another joke.

Even if he quit his job as a swordsmanship instructor, he still had this village.

Just that much would be more than enough to eat, and even if Patrick was fired as an instructor, if he decided to create a dojo and accept applications, a huge number of students would probably come in no time.

He possessed that much fame as a martial artist.

Thinking about it again, being stuck in a position where he had to defeat such a person made him shudder, but as the one once called the world’s strongest, having said that he had only learned these techniques for about 10 years, he couldn’t lose here.

So Luru spoke.

“You can still say that after all this time? …I’m looking forward to it. … Here I go, Father[/Tousan]!”

“Come! Luru!”

And like that, the battle began.

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Pressure was gradually released from their two bodies.

Their stances were like reflections of each other, both in a middle guard[chuudan] and the two showed neither any signs of unsteadiness nor any openings.

The time that passed with them in guard like that felt like both an eternity and an instant.

In terms of swordsmanship itself, Luru was inferior to Patrick.

However, he shouldn’t have lost in the ability to read the opponent.

In his days as the demon king, Luru had much experience with battle, and what that meant was that it worked no matter the opponent.

However, unlike those days, right now his body was that of a human, so Luru’s physical abilities were lowered, and his eyesight was no exception.

The shifting of his opponent, their breathing, the sounds of their

muscles moving; the demon king's technique of integrating all of these to predict the future was weakened in this era.

As a result, right now his ability to read the opponent was the same as Patrick's, and even the possibility that he was a little inferior existed.

That's why Luru naturally decided to give up on predicting things like where the opponent was going to strike if he went first.

He knew that if he attacked first, then Patrick would accurately see through his openings and attack there.

However, if they kept staring at each other, at this rate it would never begin.

He would just take the first move, and then everything after that he would leave to his instinct-sharpened responses.

There would probably be no time to think.

However, he had trained for many years in moving spontaneously without thinking.

Thus…

Like that, Luru kicked off the ground.

Of course, Patrick immediately sensed his movement, and moved his body to deal with Luru's attack.

It seems that the fact that Luru would not swing his sword but thrust, was accurately predicted by Patrick, and lowering the sword tip just a little, Patrick bent his body horizontally and avoided the attack.

However, to Luru, there was no way that he didn't know that was going to happen.

Sensing that Patrick would immediately take evasive action, Luru forcibly pulled back the sword that had been thrust, and shifting his body to the side, attacked Patrick once more.

"...-!?"

Patrick had been thinking that Luru could probably immediately get in another strike, but all the same, he was left wide-eyed by the speed.

Patrick naturally brought down his sword between his body and Luru's sword, and repelled the attack just fine, but he had no choice but to take some distance; he had retreated until they were about the same distance apart as when they first started.

From the point of view of Patrick, who was aiming for a counter after being forced to move first by Luru, he didn't think that it was a very good choice.

In fact, in Patrick's gaze who was standing 5 steps away, what was there was not the calm gaze from before, but a burning glare.

Leaving aside how things might be under normal conditions, now that Patrick's physical strength was decreased, he recognised that the one before him was not an opponent he could challenge while holding back.

It was what Patrick hadn't seen in training even up until yesterday;

Luru's aggressive and greedy side.

He hadn't really shown it in his sparring with his father, and Luru's style of the modern swordsmanship that he had practised together with Rusty, was aggressive enough that it seemed difficult to cope with upon seeing it for the first time.

"Not bad, Luru. Why haven't you used this fighting style up until now?"

Asked his father with a smile, who despite being a little surprised, still hadn't lost his composure.

However, Luru could tell from his smile that his father's fighting spirit was starting to heat up just a little.

Patrick had recognised Luru as someone worth fighting.

Realising this, Luru felt an elation like the one he felt fighting the hero in his previous life.

"Didn't you say it yourself, Dad[/Tousan]? …That it'd be better to have one or two trump cards in hold. I don't want to die, so once I become an adventurer I'll be going all out then, but even so, I think it'd be better to avoid using all my cards, so… I've been thinking about it too."

Luru's trump cards…

In other words, they his mana and techniques as an ancient demon, but also the aggressive style of fighting that he was using against his father.

The techniques that he was now using were unmistakably close to the school of Orthodox Swordsmanship that he learned from his father, but if you looked at it and at Luru as a whole, you would probably immediately mumble:

‘That’s the Demon King’s fighting style.’

If you had to describe them, his father was the stype of swordsman who would take away his opponent’s escape routes one by one and drive him into the corner, whilst Luru was the type of swordsman who would chase and destroy them no matter where they ran to.

Luru had learned his father’s method of pursuing the opponent, but Luru naturally absorbed this, and came up with a new style of fighting unique to him.

Were Luru a normal boy, he probably couldn’t have done this.

To customise and improve a sword system that had been passed down and rationalised over a long period of time was normally impossible.

However, Luru had piled up many experiences for this sake.

Creating a rational style of fighting that suited oneself, all without leaving the framework of modern swordsmanship, was not something impossible to Luru, but on the contrary merely an interesting project.

And the result was that Luru’s style of swordsmanship was a few steps more advanced than the swordsmanship system that had been passed down until now.

That advancement was not something so simple that you could immediately cope with it just by seeing it.

Even Patrick was no exception, and it was for this reason that he showed his admiration for Luru’s technique.

“Thinking about it, huh…? The foundations of your style are definitely the things I taught you, but… The details are different, and it’d be better to consider the ideology itself behind the movements as different, huh. … Are you a genius? But… It actually looks like the fighting tactics of a veteran backed with experience, but… Hmm.”

Patrick began to mutter this while they met blades a number of times.

Considering that after only a few exchanges, the answer that his father had come up with was almost completely correct, on the contrary Luru was the shocked one.

“Well, whatever… I more or less grasp what you’re trying to do. We’re both close to reaching the limits of our stamina. Shall we make the next rally the last…?”

Said Patrick, as he retreated just a little.

Luru could feel a might from Patrick’s spirit, incomparable to everything else so far.

The technique he was about to use…

It looked like an ordinary swing from above.

However, it was actually different.

It would be fine to call it a surekill technique that encompassed the entirety of the Orthodox Swordsmanship that Luru and Patrick had trained thus far.

Not just Patrick, but Luru and even Rusty could use this technique, but his degree of skill in it was incomparable.

However, right now there was only one technique that Luru could use to deal with this.

Thus, he resolved himself.

Like that, Luru and Patrick faced each other down, and at the same time, yelled the name of the technique.

“Let’s go, Luru… Single Longsword!!”

“Take this, Dad[/Tousan]… Single Longsword!!”

They met in an instant, and thus the outcome was immediately apparent.

The one standing in the end, without a single wound, was the blonde man.

It was Patrick.

/Chapter 16 END

Chapter 17 – Father's Gaze *

A dull pain shot through the back of his head.

The pain forced Luru back into consciousness, and he opened his eyes.

Having only just woken up, he looked around with an absent expression.

The scent of alcohol ran through his nose, but when he heard the clatter of drunkards, 'Ahh, this is the tavern, huh?' he realised.

"Have you awoken?"

A gentle, calm and kind voice called out to Luru, and he turned his gaze towards it.

It was a familiar girl with silver hair, glossy like silk, and eyes redder than fresh blood.

However, she looked a little older than she did in the past, and Luru suddenly realised for the first time that an intense seductiveness dwelt about her that she didn't have seven years earlier.

"...Is something the matter, Oniisama?"

Asked Iris, seemingly in confusion. She was the girl who was officially the adopted child of the Cadisnola family, and it seemed that because they were legally siblings, when they were in the presence of others, Iris referred to him as Oniisama as she did just now.

Luru shook his head at her so she wouldn't notice what he was thinking about just now[i.e. that she's hot], and advanced the conversation in the

direction of the question he was wondering.

"Umm… Why was I sleeping here?"

"That is because you were unconscious the whole time starting from when you lost to Otousama in the fight."

At that concise answer, the memories from just before he collapsed rushed up again.

The memory of failing the fight.

And then, once again looking around at the surrounding drunkenness, he found that his father and mother were amongst them, and noticed that they seemed to be drunk; something rare for them.

Whilst looking at this scene, he thought.

'Didn't I lose the fight?'

However, he mysteriously didn't feel any frustration about it.

It wasn't as though there were no feelings of 'because I lost without using my true power', but more importantly, it was because in the fight with his father, he felt that he did his very best with the swordsmanship he learned.

In particular, the very final exchange made him as elated as the battles he had with the heroes.

The happiness probably came from, for the first time in a while, knowing that an opponent existed that he couldn't defeat in a serious match.

He didn't like war, and in his previous life he wanted to avoid it if

possible, but he by no means hated fighting in and of itself.

He liked it enough that were it a battle with only their two lives on the line, he would surely enjoy the fight.

"…But I still don't get why we're in the tavern. They seem to be celebrating quite a bit… Did somebody just give birth?"

Looking around the room again, Luru felt that the bustle in the tavern was different from usual, seemingly making merry to celebrate some auspicious event.

Hence his question, but Iris seemed to reply in disbelief.

"Goodness… Oniisama. Did you forget why you fought with Otousama to begin with?"

It was an obvious reply to Luru's question.

Right.

Luru was fighting with his father to show the power he needed to become an adventurer.

And then he was supposed to win against his father, and leisurely start his journey, but…

Preparing a celebration for that in itself wasn't anything strange.

However, Luru lost.

Despite that…

When Luru voiced these concerns of his,

“It was not an issue of winning or losing, was it? And indeed, did Rusty and the others not leisurely set off on a trip a few months ago after losing? Were they not were beaten down terribly, with a strength that would not be problem for you, Oniisama…?”

replied Iris.

Rusty’s group———— Mii and Yuuri included ————were not in the village right now.

The three of them had set off aiming to be adventurers before Luru did.

Though they were of the same age group, the reason they didn’t set off at the same time was because Rusty and Mii were born a few months before Luru, and accordingly, the time when they could register as adventurers came those few months earlier.

Seven years earlier, Mii and Yuuri tried their best to somehow get Rusty to remain in the village, but no matter how much time passed, his passion towards becoming an adventurer wouldn’t cool down, so they eventually gave up. Since there was no other choice, they began training so that they could come along with him.

There was technically the issue of who would teach them the skills, specifically the combat skills they could need to become adventurers, but because there was the adventurer pair that regularly came to the village, Iris, and finally Patrick as well, in the end there was no problems with finding a teacher.

But, because Rusty was learning swordsmanship from Patrick, taking that into consideration, Yuuri and Mii wanted the positions from rear guard to middle guard for themselves, so they chose Yuumis and Iris as their teachers, and in the end they left the village quite skilled.

Before they left on their journey, as expected, the three of them ended up stuck with fighting their teachers just like Luru did; Rusty fought with Luru, Gran and Patrick, whilst Mii and Yuuri fought with Yuumis and Iris. The result was that Rusty and the others suffered a crushing defeat.

In other words, the pride that was growing in the three of them was smashed to pieces with a massive hammer.

Having said that though, the fact that they had pretty much become skilled beyond any normal novice adventurer was evident from what Gran and Yuumis said, and since things were fine then, in the end they were permitted to leave the village.

In these seven years, Rusty, Yuuri and Mii had decided that to become an adventurer, they would first head to the royal capital and join Gran's clan, and it meant that right now they were supposed to be in the capital, doing their best as novice adventurers.

The letters from Rusty and the others that arrived once a month said basically that, and they seemed to be having a great time; enough that reading this made Luru want to hurry up and leave for the capital, as though he were a normal boy from the countryside.

Luru heard that the families they left in the village received letters from them at regular intervals too, and despite being novices, they seemed to be flourishing as full-fledged adventurers.

Even the three of them who had lost in their battles against their teachers were allowed to leave the village.

If you thought about it just a little, you'd realise that there was no way that Luru, who had put up quite a good fight, would be forbidden to leave, but Luru somehow ended up with the idea that if he didn't win then he wouldn't be allowed.

It might have been a preconception born from his long time as a demon king, where loss was immediately tied to death.

Luru now realised that he had a disposition towards thinking that he had to absolutely win to achieve his goals, but because that wasn't necessarily a bad trait, he gave up on correcting himself.

“And hence, this party is for celebrating your departure, Oniisama. … Though it may be presumptuous of me, it seems that it is also celebrating the departure of I who will be accompanying you… Having said that though, as expected the most important one is you, isn’t it, Oniisama? Incidentally, after we determined that there was nothing wrong with you, we immediately started the party here… Since then, Okaasama and Otousama have been in the middle of the tavern, speaking endlessly about their memories of you, Oniisama.”

Having been told that by Iris, Luru strained his ears to hear those ‘memories’ or whatever, and found that they were endlessly repeating stories from his first cries after birth, through to the fight with Patrick, and up until when he collapsed at the end from a single blow.

And the audience nodded along, going ‘mn, mn‘, and occasionally shedding tears whilst opening up drinks without end whilst they listened.

“…I’m surprised they haven’t gotten bored yet.”

Said Luru in shock, and Iris suddenly laughed in reply.

“Drunkards are probably that sort of thing, regardless of the era.”

Luru completely agreed.

And while he was at it, it didn’t apply to just eras, but to races as well.

After all, even to the demon race, parties were more or less this sort of thing.

Whilst memories of scenes that existed in this world in the distant pass came to mind, Luru nodded deeply at Iris’ wise words.

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Even this party that seemed like it would continue until the end of the world had to end, and as the number of dead drunk people, sleeping people, and people returning home became to steadily increase, the party slowly came to a close.

Medea and Iris returned home first.

Luru had actually planned on returning home with them, but Patrick said things like ‘since you’re a man, isn’t it fine to stay a little longer?’ and ‘drink, drink’ so he was denied the option of leaving his seat.

The legal drinking age in the Kingdom of Lezaad was fourteen. In other words, it meant that there was no problem with offering Luru a drink today. Having said that though, he wasn’t going to force Luru, and it seemed somewhat that this was just a pretext.

Since it couldn’t be helped, Luru listened to his father’s story on loop whilst drinking [i.e. the stories he’s been telling endlessly], when his father’s face suddenly turned serious, and after looking around to check that there was nobody listening, spoke.

“…Luru. Why didn’t you fight me seriously?”

In that moment, Luru lost his breath in shock.

Shocked enough that his father could probably see his expression stiffen.

And then, seeing Luru’s face, his father burst out in laughter.

“Pfft… Hahaha! It’s a joke, Luru, a joke. …You don’t have to be that shocked.”

Since Patrick said that, Luru responded by taking a breath.

"Geez… Please don't start saying weird things… Dad[/Tousan]."

"Ahhahahaha. Right… It wouldn't do for you to fight me seriously, right…? You want to hide it no matter what, after all."

However, as expected, from Patrick's slightly sulking words, it seems that he had seen through Luru.

He had probably realised it somewhere along the line.

And he felt dissatisfied with Luru hiding it.

Dissatisfied that his son had a secret he couldn't tell his father.

They were feelings that Luru could sympathise with, but it was something rare for Patrick.

And realising that there was no meaning in hiding things any longer, he spoke to Patrick apologetically.

"…Sorry. It's not like I was going to hide it forever. It's just that… you said it too, didn't you? That I needed to have one or two trump cards."

Right.

Though it was something he did on his own, it was also behaviour that Patrick supported.

Because he needed to keep a move in hand so that he could expand his options in battle, and so that he could say with confidence that he could win.

That's why he needed to keep a trump card in hand. Patrick was supposed to be following this way of thinking.

Perhaps because Luru had poked where it hurt, Patrick pouted a little.

Since he was acting more childishly than usual, perhaps he was weak to alcohol.

Thinking about it, Luru couldn't recall Patrick drinking a lot at once.

Was this the reason why?

In that case, he should have been a little more prudent, but…

"I did say that, huh… It was our last battle. I thought that you'd bring out everything. But…"

Patrick continued, a little lonelily.

And with those words, Luru understood just how far his father had seen through him.

His father probably realised that Luru held some kind of mysterious trump card, but that was as far as he knew. He probably didn't know what kind of trump card it was or how powerful it was, or else he wouldn't have said things the way he did.

His match with Patrick was a match of pure swordsmanship.

In that kind of match, what Luru displayed was unmistakably all his power.

If Patrick wanted something more than that, they would have to loosen the restrictions on mana, but wishing for Luru's true strength in a match where this had been decided on from the start was nothing more than asking for the impossible.

His father might have thought as far as Luru having learned something from Gran.

Realising that he held the might of an ancient demon, or anything close to that, was probably not something his father felt from him.

So he could probably ward off his father's slight selfishness here.

But,

Since it had come to this, wouldn't it be a good choice to show him everything?

thought Luru.

To Patrick who felt the possibility from Luru, wouldn't it be good to throw everything he had at him?

thought Luru.

Luru had absolutely no thoughts of avoiding this because he was worried his father would become afraid of him.

Luru trusted Patrick that much, after all.

Patrick was without a doubt, Luru's real father.

So Luru spoke with resolve.

"...In that case, how about one more match? This time... with everything."

Because of the timing of the carriage, they'd be leaving to become adventurers not tomorrow, but the day after.

There was also the fact that Luru felt that it was worth taking at least that much time for.

And then. Having come around from his drunkenness, Patrick replied to those words with an amused expression.

"Oh?[Hohoh]... Are you being serious? You're not saying this unwillingly?"

Luru continued.

"Of course. But... I don't want you to hold back during the match either."

"...? That's obvious! Even today, holding back was..."

Patrick was speaking honestly, but this wasn't what Luru meant.

Restraining his mana and bringing his arm strength down to match his son, was not 'fighting seriously' to Luru.

"That's not what I mean... Using your mana, and not using that strength reduction Magus Tool, is what I mean."

Perhaps because Patrick wasn't expecting this, Patrick's eyes widened, as though he were sobering up.

"Luru… Are you making fun of me? Even like this, I'm probably close to the top of all the swordsmen in the country, you know? For me to… No matter how talented you are, for me to seriously fight with a fourteen year old child, you say?"

Patrick glared at Luru, with a vaguely threatening gaze.

It was, different from his usual expression, Patrick's face as a swordsman.

An oppression with bloodlust mixed in, shot through Luru.

However, this instead felt nostalgic to Luru.

Human experts of every field had challenged Luru countless times like this, and were defeated countless times.

Because of that, the emotion that rose up in him upon seeing his father like this was not fear, but instead joy.

"If you don't, I can't get serious. …This is our last battle. I don't know if I'll come back here again. You have your job too, so we can probably meet in the capital, but I can't become serious in the true meaning of the word there, and I don't think I would get serious anyway."

If he did, things would become outrageous, in various senses.

He said it like that because he understood this.

Having said this much, it seems that his father understood that Luru was speaking honestly.

It seems that he didn't believe him completely, but even so,

"…Alright. But, I really won't hold back at all, you know? Don't hate me if your injury delays your departure, okay?"

"That should be my line, Dad[/Tousan]."

Patrick looked stunned at Luru's immediate reply, to which Luru burst into laughter, so Patrick spoke.

"If you're going to say that much, then we'll do as you wish… I'll show you the power of the Kingdom of Lezaad's top swordsman."

TL Notes:

'the pride that was growing in the three of them was smashed to pieces with a massive boner' = 'the nose that seemed to be growing long [jp fg of speech] was smashed and broken by a hammer with all (the hammerer's) might'

"…I'm surprised they haven't gotten bored yet." = (i am in awe at their ability to not get bored of listening to/speaking about this)

"That is probably what getting drunk means, irrespective of the era." = "I believe that 'getting drunk' is that sort of thing, regardless of the era."

Also I'm aware that 'lonelily' is probably not technically correct, but I hear people have been speaking and writing like this for like 200+ years now, so deal. Let's make it official.

/Chapter 17 END

Chapter 18 – A Meaningless Late-Night Conversation ∗

"…What are you doing?"

In the wavering candlelight in the Cadisnola residence, in the far side of Luru's room resounded Iris' sleepy voice.

After the party at the tavern, and Luru's conversation with his father had ended, his father immediately went to sleep, but because Luru hadn't been drinking properly, he wasn't very sleepy, and it just so happened that he recalled something he wanted to do, and took out his tools and clanked around with them.

Iris who had probably already fallen asleep had apparently woken up to the sound of colliding metal, and wondering what it was, came to have a look.

Though feeling extremely apologetic about this, since it was difficult to fall back asleep once you woke up once, Luru beckoned for Iris to enter the room and showed her what he was working on.

Quietly entering the room, Iris looked at the numerous things spread out on Luru's desk, and realising what he was doing, she nodded in assent.

"…I see, a Magus Machine, is it?"

The things lay on Luru's desk probably looked like nothing but junk to an ordinary person, and a number of them were spread about.

Many of them were made of metal, but there were also things that looked like ores, or simple rocks spread about as well, and there was no

way to understand what on earth he was doing.

However, the members of the ancient demon race often saw Magus Machines, and to Iris who handled them, seeing just this much was enough to make it plain to see.

She just understood that Luru was trying to create some kind of Magus Machine.

He wasn't particularly hiding it, and ever since he discovered Iris in the ruins, he had been thinking about manufacturing and reproducing Magus Machines.

However, the surprising level of backwardness of this era made Luru hesitate to start trying.

The fact that technology had gone too far was also one of the triggers of the war between the humans and ancient demons, and as a demon king, this was something that Luru understood.

Having said so though, he also knew that Magus Machines had an aspect of them that made life extremely convenient, and because of that, he was thinking of one day endeavouring to spread not weapons, but things that made life easier.

The problem was that with this timing it was something he was quite hesitant to do, but since the Magus Machines that had maintained and guarded the ruins that Iris slept in seven years ago were collected via Gran and Yuumis, as a result of bringing them to the capital, it seems that the research of Magus Machines had progressed just a little.

There was nothing that you could call it except a world of difference from the ancient demon technology that once existed, but even so, it seemed that it had become much easier to create Magus Machines than before.

As expected, the effects hadn't spread to this village, but in a city of a

large enough size, it was no longer a rare sight to see Magus Machines, according to Gran and Yuumis, and also Patrick, whose main base of operation were in the city. Moreover, the two would occasionally bring Magus Machines under the name of souvenirs.

Since Magus Machines had diffused that far through society, this meant that Luru's reason for abstaining from creating them had become weak, at the very least Magus Machines that had a comparatively simple construction.

He had to think about the danger of the mechanisms being used for weaponry, but if it was something that would be discovered in a few years, then perhaps creating them probably wouldn't make that much of a difference, he thought.

Luru picked up the Magus Machine he was currently working on and showed Iris.

"...Can you tell what this is?"

Iris thought for a little, but it wasn't that difficult a question.

On the contrary, it was something she often saw.

She had seen them countless times in her experiences, after all.

As expected, Iris immediately answered.

"It's a Magic Cannon. ...No, it's a small-type... portable model, so it's a magus gun{Magis Pistola} perhaps I should say. They're, they're created as a means of magic attack for those who have lost their mana..."

Luru nodded at Iris' answer, and gave some small applause, as one

would give to a student who had done well.

After that, he opened up his desk, and picked up something else to show Iris.

"Well then, what's this?"

Iris looked at what Luru was holding, tilted her head, and then replied with a curious expression.

"...Is that too, a Magia Pistola? Is it a one that has already been completed?"

Iris made a guess in that direction.

You could say that it was an extremely proper guess.

What Luru held in hand was something quite similar to the Magis Pistola from earlier, and as a result of a slight design change, Iris thought that it was probably something adapted from the model earlier.

Iris thought that in the next moment, Luru would surely nod and confirm her assumption.

However,

"Nope..."

Contrary to expectation, Luru replied as such while shaking his head, so Iris tilted her head with a curious expression and asked,

"Then, what is it...?"

As Iris said earlier, no matter how you looked at it, what Luru now held in hand looked like nothing but a Magis Pistola.

From the grip of the gun to the gentle curve of the muzzle, it was a form that you wouldn't mistake after seeing it once, and didn't look at all different to the Magis Pistola that Luru held up earlier.

However, there were certainly differences in the details, and unlike the work Luru created which had no accessories or intermediaries, and was created with just the bare minimum materials, the thing Luru was holding right now had gears, and cylinders filled with liquid the colour of floating bubbles, attached to it, and was quite over the top.

It was something obviously made with a different thought process in mind from the initial planning, and was a queer little thing.

And this very thing was one of the reasons that Luru was now trying to create a Magis Pistola.

"You see, Iris, this is something I got from Yuumis. It's not something that I created…"

At those words, Iris widened her eyes in shock.

Iris immediately understood the reality made apparent by his words.

Over these past seven years, Gran and Yuumis had brought souvenirs from the various lands they had gone to, but amongst them was a pseudo Magia Pistola.

The shock that Luru suffered when he first saw it was large.

The construction and materials were obviously different from the ancient demon race's, and it looked comparatively new; something created recently.

According to Yuumis, it was something she brought from a travelling merchant, but the merchant had just randomly come into possession of it, and since he didn't really understand how to use it, he was thinking of selling it as some odd trinket he had come across.

Luru told Gran and Yuumis to constantly buy anything odd they found, so in other words, Yuumis abided by this and bought this as a souvenir for him.

And immediately after he received the pseudo Magia Pistola from Yuumis, Luru had been trying his best to get it to operate, but in the end he couldn't.

From its construction, no matter how you looked at it, it was a Magis Pistola, but even filling it with mana produced no reaction.

Luru who felt it strange had begun lightly deconstructing it, resolved that he mightn't be able to put it back together, and the result was that to begin with, there was no part inside it for storing mana.

And this being the case, there was some other theory behind its operation, and it meant that it was a Magia Pistola that worked under some new mechanism.

In this era where they couldn't even handle Magus Machines properly, there was a being who could create tools even Luru couldn't analyse.

Luru felt shock, and then strong curiosity at this fact.

And then, though it was only a little, he did feel a sense of danger about this.

In the past, the Magia Pistola was for those who didn't have mana, and was a weapon created under the concept of giving magical offensive ability to those very few people.

Because of that, the power would basically fall short of the magic a magician could use, and once you reached the level of the demon king or

the hero, almost nobody used it.

However, as an exception, if the magic or mana put into the mana storage was high enough, it stopped being useless, and if you remodelled it, you could give it immense power, or use it to fire off a spell that would be difficult to use in succession in normal magecraft.

However, the users of the latter were few in number, and to begin with, even those who could create such a weapon were few in number, so in the end, it became normal for those with powerful mana and physical ability to battle it out with swords and magecraft.

However, even so, to the lower ranking solders and to the civilians, there was no mistake that it was a weapon that possessed the power to kill.

Considering this, if the modern era ended up in a situation where there was somebody who could create Magia Pistola, and one country monopolised it, it went without saying that things would turn into an extremely dangerous issue.

At the very least, as long as one Magia Pistola existed, Luru felt that he needed to properly grasp the production method in case the need ever arose, and for that, here in his room, every day he would spend time on endeavouring in the creation and improvement of the Magia Pistola.

When Luru told all this to Iris, Iris took the one that wasn't created by Luru———— the pseudo Magia Pistola ————into her hands, and after taking a good look at it, spoke.

"Certainly… there is no reaction after filling it with mana. I wonder why…

It does feel like it is draining my mana, but…?”

“I went as far as deconstructing it to find out, but in the end I still don’t know. Even though we’re finally about to leave the village, a huge problem came along…”

Saying this, Luru sighed, but Iris suddenly smiled.

“Though you say that, you seem to be enjoying yourself, Ojisama.”

Having been told this, Luru realised that his own face was smiling a little.

“Oh[/Are]…?”

“Since the old days, you were, how should I say this… You quite enjoyed solving puzzles, didn’t you, Ojisama? Thinking back… Right. The time when my father Bacchus’ treasured drink stash disappeared too…”

Like that, Iris began speaking about her memories of how in the past, during Bacchus’ drink disappearance incident, giving a backward glance at Bacchus who was in a bad mood, Luru began happily searching for the culprit who had drunk the alcohol without permission.

And around the time she finished talking, Iris rubbed her eyes.

It seemed that she had finally gotten sleepy.

“…It seems that I’ll be able to sleep soon, Ojisama. My apologies for having you accompany me this late at night…”

“No, to begin with it’s my fault for waking you up. Don’t worry about it. I’m about to go to sleep too, so…”

“I see… That’s good then…”

It seems like she was really tired, because her eyes began tearing up, and she returned to her own room.

After putting away the things on his desk, Luru went to sleep as well.

Tomorrow there was packing for the trip, and then his rematch with his father.

It wouldn’t do to stay up too late.

As for the day of the rematch, if possible he had wanted it to be on a day when there was no risk of his father suffering a hangover, but because they had decided that they would be leaving for the trip on the day after, there was no choice but to do it tomorrow.

If it came down to it, he could use detoxification magic too, and just remove the alcohol.

Incidentally, they weren’t going to invite any spectators.

Luru and Patrick were going to fight with all their power.

Thinking about the small chance that some accident could occur, it was just a little bit, but it wouldn’t do for the people of the village who were unskilled with fighting to spectate.

Iris’ level of power was the minimum required, and so in other words,

this meant nothing other than the fact that there was nobody in the village who could spectate.

There was also the fact that he didn't want his strength itself to be known to too many people.

That's why tomorrow would be a simple 1 vs 1, a match between just two men.

Thinking about the match, Luru's heart leapt.

In the fourteen years since he was born, not once had he honestly used his power as a demon king.

He had utilised it countless times in training, but that was just training in the end, and not a fight he could enjoy.

However, this time was different.

Because his father was a truly powerful swordsman.

Perhaps his true strength would rival the heroes he had met countless times, Luru hoped.

If it was now, when he was a human, with his lowered magical circulation ability and physical strength, then he would be able to enjoy the battle even more.

It wasn't as though he hadn't ever cursed this body that wouldn't move the way he wanted, but in situations like this, where he'd be able to meet more difficult opponents, thinking about it like that made him even feel that this was perhaps not such a bad reality.

Like that, Luru extinguished the wavering light of the candle in his room, and got in bed.

Tomorrow would surely be a good day.

So he thought.

/Chapter 18 END

Chapter 19 – Battle, and Limit *

The sound of something being flicked rang out in concert with something flying Luru's way.

Upon catching it with a small SMACK, Luru found that it was cool to the touch.

Luru opened his fist and looked at it.

It was a coin representative of the currency that circulated throughout the Kingdom of Lezaad, the Lezaadian Silver Coin.

The front was of the profile of the queen that ruled the first generation of the nation, but on the back was carved the sacred beast said to protect it, the unicorn.

Why was this thrown at Luru just now?

The reason was something that only the man standing a few paces in front of him, Patrick, knew.

When the night had broken, and the morning was still misty, without anybody knowing, Luru and Patrick headed out of their house with wooden sword in hand.

The purpose was, of course, for the real duel that was promised yesterday.

As long as they were fighting seriously as promised, there was initially the problem of location, but in the end they decided to hold the battle in the forest a little distance from the village, in a clearing close to the ancient demon ruin.

Almost nobody came here, and additionally, even if there was a little damage, nobody would be troubled by it.

Though it was ‘fighting seriously’, the two of them made the distinction of not burning up the forest, and set their ability to a level where they could be careful about that.

That’s why they probably wouldn’t destroy the ecology of the forest either.

And then, when the two of them were facing each other, Patrick tossed the coin mentioned just now.

“…What’s this?”

As Luru tilted his head in confusion, Patrick spoke.

“I was thinking that it might be good as a starting signal, you see. Throw that up, and the moment it lands, our match begins, I was thinking.”

“…? Then couldn’t you have thrown it, Dad[/Tousan]?”

When Luru said that, Patrick replied,

“If I’m the one who throws it up, isn’t it possible that the fight will start without you being completely prepared? In the end, I just want to fight against your true strength… When you’re completely ready, Luru, you can throw that coin up. …Me? I’m ready whenever.”

Was that because he felt he still had room for composure, or was it bragging that because he was a swordsman, he was constantly ready for battle?

However, Luru decided to accept his proposal.

It was the truth that he was a little more worried about his control of mana than when he was a demon, and the time lag needed to use that mana and reinforce his body was not something he could ignore, once the opponent was somebody strong.

If the start signal were left to Patrick, then there was certainly the possibility that the battle would begin before he had prepared for battle, or circulated mana through his entire body.

That's why to Luru, it was a convenient proposal.

Like that, Luru began to leisurely circulate his own mana through his body.

From his well of deep mana, he pulled out as much as he could, and after compressing it, passed it through his entire body.

More than when he was born, more than seven years ago, it was now much easier to pass mana through his body and compared to the past, it was something he could do comfortably.

However, as expected, once he compared it to his time as a demon, the response was slow, or perhaps you could say it was like the out-of-place feeling of forcefully pumping water into a hose that was blocked somewhere.

He didn't know if it was because of the limits of the human body, or if he had gotten the technique wrong somewhere, but he felt that he had to make sure to take care about this so that this reality wouldn't hold him back when he was truly cornered.

Watching Luru do this, Patrick's eyes became sharp, and then he changed a little bit from how he was up until now.

Up until they had come here too, Patrick had been shocked upon seeing some of Luru's body reinforcement when he used his mana, but in the end, that was nothing more than one portion of Luru's entire mana.

This time, was different.

He poured into his body as much mana as he possible could, and reinforced himself with it after all.

Even now, Patrick's cool-looking expression hadn't faltered, but if you looked closely you could see cold sweat hanging from his brow.

He could probably feel Luru's power.

However, the fact that it ended only with a cold sweat, instead showed Patrick's strength of will.

Had a normal human been there, they probably would have fainted within just a few seconds.

That level of abnormal concentration of mana was now worn around Luru's body.

"...Luru. To think you were this..."

At the words Patrick squeezed out of his throat, Luru smiled.

"Actually, I'm still not at my best yet."

"...? You can't be saying that you still aren't being serious?"

“That’s not it. That’s not it, but… Right now there’s still some power that I can’t control, you see.”

Were he in the body of the demon king then he could completely grasp both his mana and his physical strength, so he could perfectly control it.

However, the fact that this wasn’t true right now was not something that Patrick had any way of knowing.

“I don’t really understand, but… if you’re being serious, that’s fine. … Luru, is it fine to start soon?”

If you looked at Patrick, you could see that he was itching to begin moving even now.

If you looked at Luru, you could see that his desire for battle was excited.

The confidence to start at any time, and defend against any attack was brimming from his body.

Seeing Patrick like this, because Luru had confirmed that he had plenty of mana spread through his body, he nodded.

“…Yeah. I guess… it’s time to start.”

-PINN-

Luru flicked the coin he was grasping into the air.

Spinning in the air with the queen and unicorn interchanging as the

coin went up, it stopped for a moment at the peak of its flight, and then was guided by gravity as it accelerated to the ground.

And then…

-DONN-

The moment it could be heard colliding with the ground, in that instant, the forms of Luru and Patrick blurred.

◇◆◇◆◇

Together with the sound of something hard colliding with each other, the trees growing in the surroundings shook from the shockwave.

Just one exchange, just one collision of their wooden swords had that much effect.

Of course, because they were wooden swords, normally they would have immediately broken.

However, the fact that the two swords that the pair freely collided with each other was even now without a scratch, and were even now continuing to grind as they locked together, was due to the pair's close to godlike control of the magical strengthening they placed on their swords.

Were there to be even a small mistake in the flow of, or the amount of mana, a normal wooden sword would probably crack and break from the pressure of the mana it was saturated in.

However, the mana that flowed through the wooden sword continued

without a break even the size of an ant, and was no longer a mere wooden sword, but something that now held enough strength to be compared to even a sword made of metal.

You wouldn't be let off unscathed if you were hit by it.

It was a weapon that now possessed that much destructive power.

"...I'm surprised, Luru. I didn't think that there would be so little difference between us..."

In the height of their sword-locking, Patrick said this with a grin.

"I feel the same, Dad[/Tousan]... I really do still have a long way to go, huh... I planned on finishing this with a single hit, but you withstood it..."

Luru replied as such.

Honestly speaking, as long as they said they were battling seriously, Luru had planned on not easing up even a little.

He had planned to use up all of the mana that lay within him, and steal away his father's consciousness in a single attack.

However, the reality was that that attack was stopped, and on top of that, it seemed that right now he and his father's strength were competing against each other.

[tl: need to come back and reword once i've had enough sleep. basically rather than overwhelming him, instead they're balanced-ish and are going back and forth to try and win in strength.]

The cause of this included the fact that his father was stronger than expected, but more importantly, was because Luru couldn't draw out all of his strength.

As expected, the fact that he was now in a human body had a large effect.

Once he actually fought with somebody strong, it became obvious.

It might be dangerous if he fought the way he did as the demon king, relying on his natural born physical capabilities.

Having said that though, it seemed that he had plenty enough power to engage in close combat with the powerful human, Patrick.

In addition to that, considering that he could use large scale magecraft, he wouldn't lose so easily.

They couldn't just lock swords forever.

To Luru, it hadn't been that long.

He waited for that one moment when Patrick's concentration was upset, and took a distance, and from there immediately put power into his arms, aimed towards Patrick and stepped forwards.

It seems that Patrick had sensed the danger from Luru who after parting for an instant, immediately leapt in with a thrust.

He thought to immediately ward it off, but remembering what happened yesterday, he concluded that it would be a bad move.

Luru could attack once more even if Patrick avoided it.

To Patrick, even if he knew what move Luru would take next, he didn't have the confidence that he would be able to deal with the abnormal power in Luru's second attack from yesterday.

Because of that, since there was no choice, Patrick had no choice but to bet on smacking down Luru's thrust.

Against the thrust that came at a speed that made the words ‘couldn’t be seen’ a reality, Patrick prepared in concentration to parry it downwards from the side.

However, Luru was thrusting at a speed that wouldn’t easily slow down, and even if he could do so, Patrick would probably attack him in that instant.

That’s why Luru now had no option but one.

And then, the two of them made contact.

The sound of sword colliding against sword rang out, and in the next instant, one of the swords danced through the air.

The one who won this bet, was again, Patrick.

In that instant, he was sure of his victory.

“It’s my win… -!?”

————However, during that instant, Patrick realised that the Luru reflected in his vision did not have the eyes of somebody who had lost.

Thinking about it, it was strange.

The feeling when he robbed the wooden sword from Luru’s hands.

It was, too light.

Wasn't it almost as though he was holding it one-handed?

So Patrick thought.

And the next moment, he noticed that there was something grasped in Luru's hand.

That accumulation of jet-black darkness was, from its form, without a doubt the same as that of a wooden sword.

However, that black sword whose outline wavered, was clearly not something material, and was moulded from mana.

Luru's face curved into a grin.

"Who's win was it?"

Patrick's sword was high overhead, and he realised that he wouldn't be able to cope in time.

And Luru did not overlook that opening.

Luru thrust the black sword forward, and as though gouging Patrick's gut, he advanced deeply into him.

By the time he had noticed, his consciousness was falling into darkness.

“Dad[/Tousan]… It’s, my win, huh?”

Only his son’s voice resounded in Patrick’s ears.

◇◆◇◆◇

“Good grief… my body sure hurts.”

While muttering this, Luru walked down the road to the village, with his unconscious father on his back.

Having said that though, this speed was almost no different from an average adult’s running speed, but to Luru it was not a very fast pace.

The reason being that right now Luru was suffering from what you could call intense muscle pains throughout his body.

Perhaps it would be best to call it an aftereffect of fighting seriously, or perhaps it would be best to say it was because Patrick was stronger than Luru had expected, Luru ended up having to use several levels more mana for body reinforcement than he had normally up until now, and the result was that he was stuck with the development of muscle pain.

In fact, since he was little, he had put in great effort in order to little by little add to the amount of mana he could use in body strengthening, but even so, the body of a human was far more frail than that of the demon race’s, and each time he did this, he would feel strong pain.

To begin with, at the time, when he used half of his total output then he could fight forever without any problems, but once he started using more than that, little by little the amount of time he could fight decreased, and once he tried releasing all of his mana, roughly fifteen minutes became the limit.

He understood from experience that earnestly and consistently doing this would increase the limit, and at present he couldn't even see a limit so it would be fine to strengthen himself forever, but even so, each time he did so he would be struck with muscle pains, so Luru was sick of it.

Once he started living as a human like this, thinking back on the level of effort of the heroes that he had fought in the past, even feelings of respect began to well up inside him.

Luru's physical body aside, his mana was the same as when he was the demon king, so if he could stand the muscle pain of that training then it wasn't all that tough, but the heroes should have struggled with the mana limits of a human countless times.

Towards they who had overcome even that, and came as far as defeating the demon king, Luru truly felt awe.

And Luru felt that he wanted to be able to fight like those heroes one day, but considering today's fight with Patrick, and the condition of his overworked body, that day seemed to be still far off.

It seemed that if he had a magic artillery then he could do some rather crazy things, but once he considered that he might meet people who

could Resist, even that didn't let him feel safe.

The power or weapons to nullifying magic and magecraft, or to extremely weaken it, was something that in the past, existed in no small number, and Luru remembered this clearly.

That's why in regards to his abilities in close-combat… Luru decided that it was something he needed to think about and work on.

Before long, they reached the village,

Visible at the entrance to the village was somebody's standing figure.

Once he strained his eyes, it seemed that it was Iris.

It seems that she had sensed Luru and Patrick leaving the village, and was waiting there for their return.

"Welcome back, Ojisama. How was the result?"

From her way of speaking, it seems that she more or less understood what they were leaving for.

They had used quite a lot of mana, and it didn't seem like an ancient demon's senses would have any problem in sensing it.

Luru didn't feel that he had any reason to hide it either, so he obediently replied.

"It was my win. It was my complete victory… is something that I can't say, but it wasn't a tough battle. If we redid it, there's no mistake that I would have won. Only… he was stronger than I expected, you see."

It seemed that these words were surprising to Iris, for her widened eyes displayed her shock.

“…It is rare for you to praise somebody you fought, Ojisama. Was his skill that great?”

“Were he born in that era, let’s see, it depends on his weapon as well, but maybe he’d be a good match for Bacchus? You probably can’t beat him, Iris…”

“A match for Father[/Otousama]… I see. I understand.”

Iris nodded.

After that, the three of them headed towards their home.

Along the way, Patrick opened his eyes.

“…Uu… where is this?”

“Dad[/Tousan], you’ve woken up?”

“Luru huh… Ahh, that’s right. I lost, huh…?”

‘My…,’ muttered Patrick in wonder, but he sounded by no means dissatisfied.

“I thought that the world was wide, but I never thought that my first defeat in a long while would be by the hands of my son, you know?”

Whilst saying that, Patrick got down from Luru’s back.

However, it seemed that he had also overworked his body quite a bit, and even now his legs were unsteady.

“Don’t overdo it…”

Saying that, Luru supported Patrick.

Iris supported him from the other side as well.

“Oh? Iris… You noticed?”

Said Patrick, in wonder.

Iris replied.

“I noticed that the two of you left early in the morning. After that, I waited at the entrance to the village. Mother[Okaasama] is still asleep.”

“I see… Iris, did you know about his strength?”

“In the past when I was rescued from the ruins, I had the chance to see it once.”

That was just the setting, and not the truth.

But, this was something that Gran and Yuumis had arranged their stories to match, in case it ever came down to it, so there was no problem with her reply.

“I see… It seems that there was no need to worry about you two

becoming adventurers… I'm relieved."

Said Patrick, as he cast his eyes down, before speaking again.

"But there are things that can't be solved through strength alone as well. When that happens, it's fine not to hesitate about relying on somebody else. Adults like me, or Gran or Yuumis, okay…? Understand?"

Luru and Iris nodded at his words.

It was certainly just as he said; that was exactly why there was nothing Luru could do about the war in those days.

That's why, the fact that there was something needed besides just power, was something that he deeply understood.

After that, seemingly honestly relieved at the nodding Luru and Iris, Patrick leisurely began to walk to the house, and then spoke.

"Well then, shall we start packing for you two?"

After that was finished today, Luru and Iris would be setting off on their journey tomorrow.

It wasn't as though they didn't feel any loneliness about this, but their two chests throbbed, knowing that a new everyday would be coming.

TL Notes:

'At a speed that made the words 'couldn't be seen' a reality' is 'at a level

that made the term ‘couldn’t be caught with their eyes’ not a figure of speech‘

‘Luru thrust the black sword forward, and as though gouging Patrick’s gut, he advanced deeply into him.’ You have no idea how difficult it was to stop myself from rewriting this section into blatant sexual innuendo. Aahhhh, Eris-sama, Reika-sama, Chie-nee-sama! Forgive me for I have sinned!

/Chapter 19 END

Between Chapters 19 and 20:

Idle Talk – Iris' Feelings ∗

I experienced chagrin and regret that day.

The day that the person whom I tried to reach, but in the end never could, was simply erased like mist.

Thus.

I decided that I would never part from them again.

This was the decision that I made that time, that day, that moment when I met them again. A decision that I told nobody else.

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I, Iris Taesnola, was in the far off past, born a daughter of the demon race.

Perhaps because of good fortune, my parents were a famous family within the demon race, and inheriting the blood of my mother and father who both possessed a powerful mana, I was born with powerful mana housed within me.

However, the world was not so soft that I could become powerful with nary an effort, and even for the demon race who were born with powerful mana, the skill required to handle that mana needed talent, and long years of endless practice.

It was not as though people who were born with unimaginable power, or that incredibly outstanding talent didn't exist, but amongst the many demons, there was only one such person that I knew of.

His Majesty, the Demon King Luruslia Nord Ojisama.

For he was the strongest demon in the world, and existed beyond a wall, insurmountable to all others.

His ability to manipulate mana, his mana volume, and his physical strength — all of these placed him far beyond the reaches of all others.

That Ojisama had gotten along strangely well with my father since they were young, and he often visited our house.

Unlike my heavy drinking father, Ojisama who liked to quietly sip wine while he read was a kind person who would unfailingly celebrate my birthday each year, and I think that a person like that required no important reason for me to come to like.

Unfortunately however, before I could ascertain whether these feelings were merely affection, or something beyond that, Ojisama passed away.

His chest was pierced by the holy sword of the hero who served as the emblem of the humans, and when I heard that he was annihilated, with even his remains dissolving into the air, I understood that I would never be able to meet him again, and did nothing but cry.

After that, the revenge began.

I loathed them.

That which had killed Ojisama.

The reasons that deemed Ojisama as somebody that needed to die.

Mysteriously, I did not loathe the hero.

I knew that that human had apparently held a few conversations with Ojisama.

And among those, the hero lent an ear to what Ojisama wanted to say.

I found out this truth a little while after Ojisama passed away, when the hero and the church suddenly opposed each other, and the conflict that split the humans into two began.

The fact that the church believed it was justice to destroy all of the demon race, and the fact that the hero opposed them, meant that the hero had probably stopped facing the demon clan with hostility.

And it was clear as day that the reason she did so was because of the conversation she held with Ojisama.

If the hero was following the wishes of Ojisama, then it wouldn't have done to get in her way.

That's why I didn't feel hatred towards the hero.

In that case, what was I supposed to hate?

When I considered this, at first the church came to mind.

They were the group that one-sidedly saw the demon race as enemies, and challenged us to a war.

I didn’t know what meaning there was behind this, but there was surely some significance to it.

Wouldn’t it be fine to hate them?

No, that wasn’t it, I thought.

I didn’t think that I should hate all of those who ended up following that ideology.

The human race who were deceived, the demon race who had given up on dialogue, and I, who had done absolutely nothing.

I came to believe that I should hate the way the world was.

And I came to decide on a guide for myself.

I would act to change the world.

In other words, I would get rid of conflict.

What I could do was first of all, beat down those who continued the war.

What I could do was destroy the influence of the church.

◆◇◆◇◆

However, the reality did not go well.

I was caught by an unknown somebody, and was thrown into some facility and was made to undergo long-term sleep.

And when I opened my eyes, before me were humans.

‘So the ones that shut me in here were humans?’ I thought in my half-awoken daze, and becoming angry, I ended up attacking them.

However, unexpectedly, one of the humans standing there was Ojisama…

The fact that you never knew what kind of things the ties of destinies would bring, resounded profoundly in the depths of my heart.

Because I was thrown in here, and made to sleep, I was able to meet with Ojisama.

Once I thought that, on the contrary, I even felt that I couldn’t thank them enough.

And then, in that instant, I decided.

That I would never part from them again.

I think it just happened to come to mind.

However, at the time, it felt extremely natural to me.

I didn't know the name of this emotion that resembled determination, but I felt no hesitance at following it.

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Ojisama lived as a human in a human village.

When he told me this, it was natural that I was shocked.

However, the reality was that Ojisama's appearance was that of a human, and because of that I couldn't reject the facts.

I met with his two parents, but as expected, the two of them were humans, and I could feel that they had not a single thing to do with the demon race.

In fact, the fact that they didn't think I was a demon at all was…

Mysterious.

Even though they were humans, they weren't different to the demon race in any way, and I was able to live with them without a single problem.

It was mysterious.

It was a demon ideology that souls were all equal, and the same souls just lived in different bodies.

However, living beings are easily influenced by what they see.

It was natural that it was easy to group together with those that looked the same as you, and so it couldn't be helped that you felt a little hesitance when it came to others.

Even though this should have been the case, I, who was the only one in the village with silver hair, was easily taken in by Ojisama's parents.

On top of that, they even spoke about becoming their daughter, and I really did end up as their foster daughter.

It was something that was absolutely impossible in the era when Ojisama and I battled.

I felt shock at the fact that the long flow of time could wear down prejudice, and turn it into a completely trifling matter.

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I met the children in the village, and even learnt something.

Shockingly, Ojisama had friends of his own age.

It goes without saying that Ojisama would ordinarily be far older than them, but to my surprise, Ojisama was skilled at pretending to be a seven year old boy, and fostered friendships.

Those friends of his were a boy named Rusty, and two girls named Mii

and Yuuri.

When I first met them and they saw me, the moment the boy, Rusty, stuttered,

“N-, Nice to meet you…”

as he held out his hand, I felt deeply moved about the fact that this era really was different to my old one.

Were it that era, a human child holding out their hand to a demon was an impossible scene.

Was the fact that Mii and Yuumi seemed to be glaring a little because of their avoidance of the demon race?

No, that probably wasn’t it.

According to Ojisama, the knowledge about how ancient demons look wasn’t passed down to this era.

Accordingly, it was impossible that these children know that I’m an ancient demon.

In light of all of this, it meant that the two girls were glaring at Rusty for a different reason, but… Didn’t their behaviour towards him seem a little affected?

I tried to recall a reason, but couldn’t.

It was on my mind, so when Rusty and Ojisama were playing together by themselves, I spoke to the two girls that were around them at a

distance.

When I did…

“…Eh? You haven’t noticed?”

“This girl, could it be that she’s actually dense about these things…?”

Said the two of them together.

When I asked them what they meant, they said that Rusty had fallen for my doll-like appearance at first glance, and after shaking my hand, his face was red for a while.

In other words, he held ‘good will'(love) towards me, and to the two of them, that was an extremely perilous situation.

Because they even went as far as asking if I could somehow step back, I found it hilarious and started laughing.

“Huhuhu…”

“It’s not something to laugh about…”

Said the younger girl, Mii, as she puffed up her cheeks in a pout, as though defending herself.

“Ah, I’m sorry. I did not intend to make fun of you… Rather, I was thinking that I was a little blind, you see.”

“Blind?”

Asked Yuuri, as she tilted her head to the side.

I continued.

“Yes… Though I feel sorry towards Rusty, it seems that my heart already belongs to another…”

“Eh-… M-, meaning…?”

“We’d sure be happy if you told us…”

A moment ago they were feeling an impending crisis, but now their expressions suddenly changed, and their faces began nearing me as though pressing me for an answer.

Seeing their expressions, I suddenly thought, ‘Back then, my friends and I used to talk about this sort of stuff too, huh.’

While recalling those friends whom I would never meet again, I felt a little moved at the fact that it seemed that I’d be able to make new friends over here.

Then, I spoke.

“They’re somebody who is a little bit… my senior.”

“Your senior… I see, then Rusty is in the clear, huh.”

Said Mii, seemingly relieved.

“By senior, just how much do you mean?”

Asked Yuuri, cutting in.

“I don’t believe that it is ten or twenty years, but… Exactly how much is it, I wonder? At this point, just how I am supposed to calculate it…?”

I said, a little troubled.

I didn’t know how I was supposed to measure Ojisama’s age, precisely.

Should I just count it normally, or should I count the years back then as well?

However, without hearing me out to the end, Mii and Yuuri, in shock,

“EHH!? I-, isn’t that a grown-up then?”

“Iris-chan is a precocious one, huh… It gave me a shock…”

Said Mii and then Yuuri, as they flushed red.

Yuuri then continued,

“When it comes to the older men around Iris-chan, then… There’s no one but the adventurer Gran-san, and Patrick-san, you know…”

Mii accepted this, and nodded.

“You’ve ended up with a tough love, huh… Mmm, we’ll cheer for you, okay!?”

The two of them unilaterally advanced the conversation on their own, but because of their threateningly intense attitudes, I accidentally went,

“M-, mmm…”

and ended up giving a vague reply.

After that, after I returned home, Ojisama casually said to me,

“…I don’t know if it’s Gran or Otousan, but wouldn’t it be better to give up on them? I mean… look, the age difference really is too… You know?”

So I replied,

“Ojisama. The likes of ‘age difference’ is but a trifling issue. On the contrary, it’s romantic because one overcomes it! You feel the same, right!?”

Because it was a rare occasion where I spoke forcefully, Ojisama was pressured and said,

“Y-, yeah… Well, I guess. Mmn. If the person herself is fine with it,

then…”

I felt that a strange misunderstanding was being born, but decided to leave it aside.

For now, this distance between us was fine.

One day, once I become a little older…

Thinking this, I decided to hold these feelings in my heart for a little while.

/Side Story END

TL Notes:

good will 好意（こうい）is a common (and obvious) euphemism for love

Chapter 20 – Departure, Stop-over *

The day of departure came surprisingly quickly.

The day that it was decided that they would become adventurers might have been too busy.

Having used up all energy in their bodies partying that night, and even leaving a day free, with their hangovers gone, everybody felt a strong sense of loneliness at the pair's departure, and a few people even burst into tears.

However, once someone said that rumours of the two would immediately be heard in town, the atmosphere was stopped from getting any more depressing.

Thinking back on it, the time with Rusty and the others was just like this too, and Luru being on the side that was seeing them off, separated from them quite readily.

It wasn't as though they were going to war.

Although you couldn't say that it was impossible that they would die today or tomorrow, and that it would be an eternal farewell, it wasn't a situation where they were cornered enough that they had no choice but to worry about such a thing happening.

The danger of the adventurer profession was incomparable to normal jobs, but they understood that at least it wasn't a situation where they would immediately receive news of their death, and the two would be sending a few letters back to their parents once they arrived in the

capital.

The villagers all knew that they were trained by Patrick, Gran and Yuumis, so they weren't needlessly worried about the pair dying.

Behind the curtains of the carriage, Luru sat there, legs swinging back and forth as he burned the scenery of the receding village into his memories, deciding that he would not forget it.

Thinking about it, including his time as the demon king, he had almost never been on the side of those departing.

On the contrary, when he was the demon king, he would encourage the soldiers heading to the frontlines, seeing them off, and rarely appeared on the frontlines himself, so he had few experiences of being seen off himself.

He originally thought that this second life of his might be filled with only things he had already experienced, but leaving on a journey was the beginning of a very fresh experience to him.

"It's a good sign, huh…"

Luru muttered this, and Iris who was dressed in traveling clothes, spoke with a smile beside him.

"In the past, you seldom had the free time to go on journeys, didn't you, Ojisama…?"

Looking with desire beyond the mountains, Iris recalled them.

The past, the old days.

Luru's old form.

"Even though Bacchus always got to go on trips… Why was I the only one who had to stay in the castle?"

"The most important person to our people is not somebody who can move on their own… And, it was because there was no replacement for you, Ojisama… We could not lose you at, any cost…"

Long ago, the demon king was powerful.

However, he was not absolute.

The conclusion of that battle was proof of this.

When he disappeared, just how many people had darkness borne in their hearts?

When he considered this, it felt as though his chest was going to split part.

Seeing Luru's face, she probably understood what he was thinking about.

She spoke caringly.

"The past is the past. Please excuse me… I brought up that topic again."

“Nah, my bad. I get that I’m overthinking this stuff but… I can’t help it.”

“No. It is because you are like this that the demon race followed you… However, shall we move on from the gloomy topics? Ojisama, let us speak about what we will be doing from now on.”

Because Iris suddenly began speaking cheerfully like this, Luru decided to switch gears as well.

“From now on, huh. For now, I guess our goal is the capital. The Lezaadian Royal Capital, Desielt. We’ll pass through a number of villages…. It seems like it’ll take about a week.”

“Once we arrive, will we be registering as adventurers?”

The requirements for registering with the Adventurers Guild was just your age, and a single silver coin.

Because they didn’t require anything else from you, Luru felt that hurrying up and registering was probably the most efficient.

But, there were some people he had to show his face to, or perhaps you could say that there was a promise he ought to fulfil.

Luru hadn’t forgotten this.

“That’s the plan, but… it might be better to go meet with Gran and Yuumis first. Those guys have created a clan in the capital so… that means that Rusty and the others are there as well.”

Hearing Rusty’s name, Iris grinned.

“I wonder if everybody has gotten strong. Have Mii and Yuuri been able to use their magic well…?”

Saying that, Iris looked into the air as though recalling something.

Leaving Rusty aside, Mii and Yuuri were Iris’ first human friends, as well the first beloved pupils she had brought up herself.

It probably couldn’t be helped that she was wondering how strong they had become in the few months that she hadn’t seen them.

Thinking about it, the training that Iris gave them was very harsh.

She recalled how even her tone of speech changed, and how Rusty, Gran and Luru who were training more relaxedly in the same place turned gazes of pity towards that hellish training that gave not an inch of reprieve.

It was only after recalling the things she did to them, that Luru realised how after his death, and the harsh training Iris went through, Iris had gone around attacking the church’s forces as a guerilla soldier.

The ancient demons were not fundamentally spartan in their training, but there certainly were some who went mad with their training, so perhaps Iris’ trainer was one of those.

There were traces of one of his long gone subordinates in Iris’ training with the two, so this guess was probably correct.

He understood as well that in order to have Iris who was nothing more than a child, combat ready within just a few years, there was no method

but that.

However, having said that, there was probably no need to have even Mii and Yuuri go through that as well…

Thinking that, he thought of indirectly suggesting to Iris about not being too harsh, but the words that she gave as her reply were extremely unexpected.

“The only reason that I did so was because the two of them requested that I be as harsh as possible, and so…”

For a moment he wondered “Really?” in doubt, but Iris had no reason to lie.

Being the case, then it meant that those two wanted Iris’ harsh training themselves but, why exactly?

What spurred them towards such harsh training was too much of a mystery to him, and he couldn’t stand not knowing.

So, when he asked Iris about this,

“Even if it is you, Ojisama, it is not something I can tell you. It is what you would call, a maiden’s secret.”

She evaded answering.

The two of them probably forbade her to talk about it.

If that wasn’t the case, then Iris shouldn’t have hid it from him…

Having thought that far, feeling just a tad bitter, Luru suddenly gasped

in realisation.

Wasn't this the loneliness of a parent whose daughter was growing independent?

Coming to this idea, Luru murmured in his mind.

'Bacchus. It seems that your daughter has grown into a fine young woman.'

Speaking of which, just what had that guy gotten up to after he died, Luru wondered.

As Luru expected, even if he asked Iris she didn't know, but Iris did assess her father as 'a person who won't die even if you kill him' and Luru held the same feelings towards him.

In either or nine cases out of ten, he stayed alive even after Luru's death.

And… just how had he lived?

There no longer remained any way for Luru to know.

However, it would be nice if in the end, Bacchus somehow found happiness.

So Luru thought.

Like that, the shaking carriage continued down the highway.

They passed through a few small villages.

Turning back to face Luru and Iris,

“We’ll be staying overnight at the next town, so prepare yourselves.”

said the carriage driver.

If they looked carefully, they could see a grey wall a little further ahead.

Up until now, Luru had never been to a large town, so this really was quite a sight to him.

As for Iris, she didn’t seem all that surprised and said,

“It is a large town, isn’t it? …Well, it’s no match for the Demon Capital Kuranu though.”

Kuranu was a town that once belonged to the demon race, and certainly its size and scope could not be compared to by a town like the one before them.

From Iris’ point of view, the sight of Kuranu was not all that long ago.

Was it because he died once that Luru could only faintly remember it? Or was it because he had forgotten it because he had grown older?

It was a sad thing, so he wanted to believe it was the former.

While he was thinking this, the carriage finally arrived at the city gates of the fortress city.

By the gates stood a number of soldiers, and it seemed that they were checking the people that were entering the town.

The carriage that Luru and Iris rode was no exception, and after checking the driver, the luggage, checking Luru and Iris' faces, and asking about their origins, they jotted something down.

However, that was basically it, and immediately afterwards,

"Welcome, to Fortress City Finale!"

said the guards in a welcome.

It seemed to be a routine greeting because not a shred of emotion appeared on the driver's face as he began moving the carriage again, but Luru found it somehow fun, and smiled at the soldiers.

When he did, the soldier gave him a prompt thumbs up, so Luru returned it.

Since they somehow understood each other, Luru's mood improved.

As for Iris, she gazed at Luru with a smile, seemingly finding the scene heartwarming.

"Having fun?"

Being asked that, Iris smiled and answered.

"Yes of course!"

That smile was something rare for Iris; unlike her usual reserved and somewhat ephemeral self, she was giving a broad smile, brightly illuminating her surroundings like the sun.

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After entering the city, the carriage immediately headed to an inn.

There was already a place prepared to leave the carriage, and it was seemingly intended for such use to begin with.

Probably because it was on the way to the capital.

There was also a lot of pedestrians, and the streets were wide to accommodate for this.

The inn they entered was quite thoroughly cleaned.

As you'd expect there was no bath, but there was at least a place to pour water over yourself, and not only were the beds white, the meals were apparently delicious as well.

Because the sun had gone down but it was still too early for dinner, to kill some time Luru decided to have a stroll around the city with Iris.

"It's dangerous with only you children."

said the carriage driver in concern, but,

"We are intending to become adventurers, and my father has acknowledged my strength as well, so we'll get by somehow."

Luru replied, and after looking like he had just recalled it, the driver assented.

Seeing that the driver had that much faith in his father's strength, Luru felt a little happy.

After that,

"Well then, shall we go, Ojisama?"

said Iris, so after nodding to her in reply, they left the inn and headed out to the town together.

/Chapter 20 END

Chapter 21 – Sightseeing

Fortress City Finale.

Historically it began as the royal capital's first line of defence against the powerful monsters that descended from the mountain range to the north, but it seems that by now it was nothing more than an unimportant frontier city.

For a while after the founding of the Kingdom of Lezaad, large numbers of monsters on the Logsera Mountain Ranges were running rampant, but that situation had immediately changed when a few hundred years ago, an Ancient Dragon had settled down on the mountain.

Perhaps because the powerful monster had become a powerful source of leadership for the lower class monsters, or perhaps because they had become the prey of the Ancient Dragon and no longer had the leisure to move south, the numbers of monsters from the mountain ranges that headed southwards towards Finale dropped sharply.

Presently it was an extremely peaceful city, and although it wasn't as though there weren't any monster attacks at all, even so almost none of the powerful monsters that dwelt in the mountain ranges had been seen around Finale.

Right now it was known as a trade city that was right between the capital and a number of rural towns and villages, and there were more merchants than soldiers.

It's title as a fortress city was a leftover from the past, along with the surrounding tall stone walls that gave the city its fortress designation.

He had brought Iris along, and talking a stroll through the city and finding everything extremely curious, he was enjoying himself.

Being known as a trade city, there seemed to be goods from various places, north, west, east and south, and it was enough that he wanted to

spend a whole day killing time there.

"Ojisama… Please look at this!"

Being told that by Iris, he looked at where she was pointing and found that there were magic tools, ornaments, and even food.

Because she seemed to be having a lot of fun, he was glad that they came here.

Moreover, he found not a few magus machines being sold there, and went over with Iris to window shop, but contrary to his expectations there were a number of interesting things, so after careful selection he bought one.

The magus machine that he bought was not large; it was small and seemed to be handheld, something like a primitive magus gun (Magia Pistola).

Having said that though, it was different not only to the one that Yuumis brought, but to the one that Luru made as well, and you could actually say that it was almost a magic tool.

The different between a magic tool and a magus machine was whether or not you needed to insert magic, and whether or not it would run only with the insertion of mana. These were the two large differences, but there were also some differences in construction, and you couldn't explain it simply. Moreover, there were also magic tools where you inserted mana, and there were also magus machines where you inserted magic. It was an issue of magnitude.

In the end, differentiating them was quite vague, but explaining it simply, their effectiveness was simply different. This wasn't exactly

correct, but with this way of thinking you could correctly distinguish most of them.

However, the thing that Luru had bought was something in-between a magic tool and a magus machine, not using that erroneous criteria of effectiveness, but in a true sense where it was in a transitional period in magical technology. Because of this, Luru found it interesting.

A magus machine was something that created phenomena different from the fundamental principles and ideas of mana and magic.

It relied not only on mana and magic, but used the understanding of natural laws and the construction of the tool itself.

Things built in such a manner were magus machines.

Incidentally, what Luru purchased was shaped like a staff, and on the end of the staff there was a large crystal attached. A shot of low class magic could be inserted, and that way you could fire a pre-prepared magic without any time required. An extremely questionable effiency.

It might be better to call it a magic staff rather than a magic pistola, but the concept behind it was the same as a magia pistola.

The difference in form was but a slight issue.

Being able to chantlessly use a single spell gave you quite an advantage, so you probably couldn’t call it useless. Moreover, because you’d have already inserted the magic, even if you didn’t have mana you could use it which was another advantage.

Only, in a battle between magicians, it was probably useless.

If it was just low class magic, it would probably be enough just to have chanted some of it in advance.

At Luru and Iris’ level, they could use it without chanting, so you could

even say this staff had no use to them at all.

However, it seemed like it would be good use as an excuse for when they had to actually use chantless magic, and there was also the reason that using a staff seemed more magician-ey, so he bought one.

As for the problems in efficiency, he could just remodel it one of these days.

"...Ah-"

While they were wandering about the marketplace, they bumped into people a numer of times.

Luru did, Iris did, sometimes the two of them together.

Most of the time they bumped into raggedy children so their goal was apparent, and in fact, they slapped away the slippery hands that entered the crevices of their clothing a number of times.

"Wealth disparity is something that won't disappear no matter the era, isn't it?"

Each time, Iris would say that with a sad expression.

Both in the distant past and in the present, this was something that hadn't changed. On the contrary, because in the past the world was embroiled in war, poor people and orphans just increased.

She was probably speaking with that memory in mind.

Luru felt the same on this point, and in the past he had tried his best to give them protection, but even so he had seen not a few children with blacked faces, wandering the battlefields looking for food.

“…That it can’t be helped, is something I don’t want to say, but… Speaking of which, the Church was zealous in giving shelter to orphans too, weren’t they?”

Luru suddenly recalled them.

The organisation they had continued to war with held extremely cruel and harsh ideas regarding the demon race, but they seemed extremely warm to humans, busying themselves extending the scale of their philanthropic activities.

One of the things they did was shelter orphans, but the orphans they sheltered often ended up as believers of the church or soldiers who fought on the frontlines, so their goal was clear.

It was much better than simply dying a dog’s death but… It was hard to put it into words.

Luru felt it a difficult topic.

“The Church, was it? It’s a nostalgic organisation but… why don’t they exist in this era? Even though the ones who won the war were undoubtedly the humans. Could it be that the Hero really did destroy them?”

Iris raised a doubt.

Indeed.

In the seven years that he had been investigating, there was nothing like the Church from those days.

They didn’t appear in the annals of history, and seemed to have been consigned to oblivion.

There were religious organisations that called themselves “the chuch”

in this era as well, but they had no relation to the Church of that era, and Luru knew that they were different organisations.

From religions that worshipped extremely simple nature gods, to religions that worshipped a number of gods that were more like people, all the way to religions that prayed to rocks and mountains, there were a great variety of religions, building temples here and there. However, that Church from those days that worshipped a single deity, that talked of being saved by a Hero, and carried a slogan of completely eradicating the demons, there was no sign or trace of them to be found.

Just where on earth had they gone?

Had they disappeared in the waves of history along with the Ancient Demons?

Luru had no idea how he would investigate this though…

"…I'll look into it one day. Fortunately, it seems that in the capital there's a library with books from all around the world, huh."

Besides that, they had no other leads.

It would be good if they could find out what happened to the Ancient Demons by searching the library as well, but his hopes were slim.

However, hearing Luru's words,

"The past… It would be nice if we could find out what happened, wouldn't it?"

smiled Iris.

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Wondering is there were any tourist attractions besides the marketplace, the two of them walked about.

He had wanted to see how developed a normal Lezaadian city was, so just walking about was plenty meaningful, but he also had the spirit of a tourist, wanting to see something interesting.

When he said this to Iris,

“I heard from Yuumis that there was an lake-floor city someplace. In a place like that there might be a lot of places to see, but if I had to say it, I think that Finale is more a place you would come for shopping.”

she replied.

Luru had also heard of a ‘lake-floor city’.

Having said that though, it wasn’t located in the Kingdom of Lezaad, and moreover it wasn’t a place that humans actually lived in, and was treated more like a den of monsters.

You could perhaps call it a historical relic.

Having said that though, it was apparently not Ancient Demon in origin.

At any rate, Luru had no memory of such a city, and Iris was the same.

“Since there’s a city at the bottom of a lake, it seems like there should be a city in the sky as well, huh.”

When Luru said this, Iris replied,

“It would be interesting if there was one, but… I don’t think there would be one on this continent. If there was a city on the Sky Continent that existed in the past, then perhaps you could call that a Sky City, but… in the end nobody could set foot there, so…”

What Iris spoke of was a continent that was discovered floating in the sky, in the past.

“The Sky Continent, huh… How nostalgic. I had wanted to try going there, but…”

That continent was once called the Sky Continent, and the continent beneath it that served as a base was called the Dark Continent, and nobody knew by what principle it floated above it. It was a mysterious land.

There existed magus machines for flying which people had tried to use to get there, but once you got close the operation of the machine would worsen, and you’d crash.

They challenged themselves to improve the magus machine a number of times, but in the end their wish to reach it went ungranted, and it was left in history as a mysterious continent.

Incidentally, in those days the humans, and in particular, the Church, had claimed that it was where angels lived, but however you looked at it, that was all talk.

Because at any rate, they hadn’t been able to go there themselves either.

There was also the problem of flying up there, but more importantly, between the Sky Continent and the Crescent Moon Continent that held the human headquarters was the home of the demon race, the True Demon Continent, blocking them off like a wall. Even when they tried to avoid the True Demon Continent by travelling by sea, they would be swept away by currents, and as for travelling through the air, the demons naturally had flying machines, so that was impossible. All this meant was that it was only something they knew about from afar, unable to do a thing besides sucking on their thumbs.

Had they just stopped the war and asked to be allowed pass to the Sky Continent that would have bene fine, but they wouldn't stop so the Church in those days were probably all hardcore in their beliefs.

If possible, Luru wished for that kind of group to never be born again, but…

"I wonder if the Sky Continent is floating even now… I had tried to find out what kind of place it was, but… If it still exists, I'll try researching it again."

When Luru said this, Iris placed her index finger to her mouth and said,

"Ojisama, you tried going there once in a flying machine, but failed, didn't you? …Speaking of which, is that when it first started? Your acrophobia, I mean."

She casually mentioned Luru's weakness.

He frowned.

"Acrophobia… I'm, bad with high places."

What came to mind was the blue sky he had seen from the window of the flying machine, that time he had flown it through the sky.

And then flying from the True Demon Continent for half a day, and then the sudden appearance of the continent that treated the skies as its ocean.

The spectacle that was the highlight of the trip.

And, the moment it had come into sight, the sound of the alarms in the flying machine.

The altitude he was losing, and the mana that served as fuel disappearing for some reason…

"…That was, scary."

"If I remember correctly, father had gone as a crew member as well, hadn't he? Just hearing the circumstances is enough to make my blood run cold. No matter how much stronger than humans we demons are, dropping from such high altitudes is not something you'd escape from unharmed… Although, even if I can't say you and father would escape unscathed, you would certainly survive."

Although that was true, the chance of being grievously injured was not little.

In particular, the flying machine they had been riding on was a large model with stupidly powerful output, and if you made a mistake in controlling it, it was possible that it would cause harm equivalent to a number of large scale spells.

Even if they were the demon king and his close aide, it wasn't thinkable

that they wanted to sit in the middle of a large scale magic.

"I would think that battling with the Heroes would have been much scarier but..."

Iris tilted her head in wonder, and Luru replied.

"That kind of thing has its own terror..."

However, in the end Iris couldn't understand.

When Luru asked her about it, it turned out that Iris liked flying machines, and was apparently fine even at high altitudes.

Luru felt somehow scared from the beginning, so he probably had the fear of heights in him to begin with.

There was certainly fears like 'I'll die so it's scary' and 'I'll get injured so it's scary' but... How should one say this? Perhaps you could call it a physiological fear.

Finding it difficult to find the best way to explain it, in the end Luru gave up on explaining it.

/Chapter 21 END

Chapter 22 – Church and Priestess

While walking around, before they knew it the sky was dyed madder red.

In this orange world, the inhabitants of Finale's marketplace were beginning to pack up, and one by one they walked home with happy expressions, probably to their awaiting families.

Luru and Iris were thinking about heading back too, but along the way a church suddenly caught their attention.

"…I'm curious." (Luru)

So muttered Luru, before the entrance, filled to the brim with empty darkness, of a church that seemed uninhabited.

He hadn't really had a chance to see a church institute up until now, and hadn't gone into what you'd call a proper church until now either.

In the days as a demon king he'd searched through the interiors of destroyed churches before, but both the construction style and exterior of the churchs in this era were different.

To begin with it was a different religion so that much was obvious, but that was exactly why he wanted to have a look at least once.

"If we do not stay for too long, we should be able to make dinner. Please do as you wish, Ojisama. I shall accompany you." (Iris)

So replied Iris.

Taking her up on her words, Luru slowly entered the church.

Probably not barring people from coming and going, the door was fixed open.

After taking a step inside, the lively bustle they could hear outside became distant, and Luru who wasn't particularly religious towards the church, felt for some reason that he was getting in the mood to be so.

It seems that the inside of the church was extremely bare, and only had the bare minimum.

A number of tough looking benches were lined up, and further in the church was a podium that was higher than the rest of the floor.

Essentially this was all.

However, after having almost looked through the entire place, something surprisingly suddenly came to Luru's attention, and his mouth opened in astonishment.

"Ojisama…!?" (Iris)

It seems that Iris was feeling the same way, because she raised her voice as she stared at the one point.

It was further in than the podium.

She was looking where the light was seeping in through the colourful stained glass, and normally you wouldn't find anything strange.

There, was a figure.

In contrast to the inside of this church that was dominated by grey, there stood a richly coloured, or rather properly coloured, statue.

It was the figure of a standing person.

His hair that should have been silver was by the protection of the flame spirits, dyed an exceptional burning red. And he wore a masculine expression, that seemed to symbolise his personality. From his slightly revealing outer clothing you could tell that his arms were, though thin, well built.

From a glance he seemed to be a youth, but those shining red eyes of his housed a calm and knowing expression, and had a gaze that seemed to look into the believers that came to the church.

That face, and that expression. And the colour of that hair.

Luru clearly remembered them.

Why, was in a place like this?

Why, was he standing like that in a place like this?

Luru wanted unbearably to ask.

But he knew that even if he did, there would be no reply.

For the man was not actually standing there.

It was nothing more than a statue.

And like that, Luru squeezed out a voice and called the name of the statue.

“…Bacchus…” (Luru)

Indeed, the statue in the church was Luru’s friend long ago, the man who was not only the trusted confidant of the Demon King, but Iris’ real father.

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“Did you calm down?” (Iris)

Iris gently asked as Luru was slumped down on a bench wearing a haggard expression inside the silent church. By nature it would not be too strange for Iris to be upset. However she appeared to be calm on the outside.

Luru thought that she was a daughter capable of doing that.

“Umm … how about you, Iris?” (Luru)

When Iris heard the question she looked puzzled but then smiled pleasantly.

“Though it would be a lie to say I was not surprised. But well … after all it is father we are talking about. No matter how strange it may seem, it is

nothing too miraculous, I do think.

It is less astonishing than Ojisama at the very least …" (Iris)

Bacchus was certainly one of a kind.

While he possessed a strong sense of duty as a loyal retainer, it was also true that he was a bad influence tempting Luru to play around even though it wasn't appropriate. One could say it was in his nature and it might be justified.

As such it was difficult to understand why such a guy was enshrined in a church … but even so something unexpected might have happened. What a ridiculous fellow he was.

As expected, Iris was indeed his daughter, Luru confirmed this point profoundly once more. Descending from Bacchus the same nature was deeply rooted within her.

"… Mmm. Just now you thought of something rude … ?" (Iris)

Iris said while tilting her head.

… Her intuition was oddly sharp too.

Luru thought of quickly stopping his imprudent thoughts.

"Be that as it may, why is there such statue of Bacchus?" (Luru)

Luru changed the topic of conversation.

Since there was no especially awkward break in the conversation flow, Iris naturally joined the discussion while still holding a doubtful expression though.

"... Indeed, I have no clue why either. Although the statue is supposed to depict a pleasant person, the character of the person himself doesn't fit the criteria at all." (Iris)

"That is true indeed ..." (Luru)

While nodding, Luru was shedding tears due to the correct assessment.

You should honor your father a bit more, shouldn't you? But as a friend he could only confirm, what is correct stays correct no matter what you do.

Because he was a guy selfishly doing whatever pleased him, he was the exactly opposite type of character in contrast to Luru who was tied down by his duty and thus restricted in his actions. Most likely because of this fact they got along so well.

"I have no idea what happened to that fellow after the war." (Luru)

"Oh? ... That is right. I fear that it's likely that he fought arrogantly on various battlefields, gathering the remnants of the surviving demons to improve their chances ... but any more than that ... " (Iris)

Even so there seemed to be no concrete information at all. Since she slept in the ruins at that time, it couldn't be helped that she didn't know.

"It seems there is no clue to follow at all ..." (Luru)

While Luru was discussing this with Iris he saw someone entering the church. Turning around to look at the back, there was a woman in a light brown travelling outfit. Her face was not visible as she was wearing a robe. The sword she was wearing at her hips was in plain sight, even more so you could see that it had been used quite a bit already.

Was she a travelling sword woman or something?

While considering this, Luru was staring at her impolitely.

“Excuse me.” (Woman)

The woman opened her mouth, unfastening the sword and putting it on the ground. Then she untied the travelling outfit. After taking it off, one could see pure white priest clothes emerging from beneath.

Long golden hair was flowing down. The eyes were azure blue like the sky and she had smooth skin. To put it bluntly, she was a very beautiful woman.

Unfortunately neither Luru nor Iris knew anything about the religious community, thus they stood still without uttering a word, as the woman started to talk to them.

“What’s up? … Are you in some kind of trouble?” (Priestess)

You could say Luru was troubled but could this woman in front help out in the first place?

Well, she was wearing the priest clothes after all, even more so since she came to this church. It would be quite odd if she didn’t know about

the religious belief here to some extent.

Reaching this conclusion, Iris and Luru thought it might not be a bad idea to ask this woman.

After a quick confirmatory glance towards Iris, Luru, representing the two, asked the woman.

“Rather than being troubled … Who on earth does this statue represent? It caught my attention …” (Luru)

The woman nodded, and said

“This is apostle Bacchus. He is the saviour who saved our world when it fell into chaos. In our belief he is worshipped as a saint.” (Priestess)

“Sa … Saint, is it?” (Luru)

Luru stuttered in shock as this would be the most far-off position this fellow could be in. Iris seemed to be of the same opinion.

“I guess I will boil us some tea for now …” (Iris)

she said.

Putting the issue at hand aside, the tea Iris made was very delicious.

Being revitalized Luru was well enough to resume the questioning again

“What kind of chaos did the world fall into that needed saving?” (Luru)

Then the woman nodded in confirmation,

“The story will take a while, is that alright with you?” (Priestess)

She pointed to a bench. Luru offered her a seat. However, before she sat down she picked up the sword from the ground at her feet and held it horizontally in her hands. After that she slowly began to talk.

It was about a legend.

There was nothing unexpected in the story as it was about how once there was a war between the ancient demons and the hero. The hero killed the demons bringing peace to the world …

It was such a story.

However, Luru was tempted to tilt his head to the side in puzzlement many times as there were quite a few odd points to the story. One point being the fact, that Bacchus was part of the hero faction. Furthermore, one person who should originally been there was missing completely. The holy woman was not mentioned at all.

When he inquired about this aspect,

“… Well, a holy woman. There is no such person mentioned in our scripts about the past events. Where did you hear about this?” (Priestess)

She asked in return.

However, to not be caught in a dead end, Luru was not able to say anything specific.

“Well, I may have confused it with some other stories …” (Luru)

There was no other choice but to put it this way. The woman showed comprehension toward the reply saying “Well, something like this happens occasionally.” and nodded.

After the woman finished talking about the various legends, Luru offered a prayer to the statue and left the church.

According to hearsay she seemed to be a wandering priestess who visited the remote frontier villages for spreading the teachings of her religion there.

Her rank within their religion also seemed to be reasonably high, being of the 3rd order.

To grasp her status, one needs to know that the lowest rank starts at the 28th order. Apprentices begin their way of priesthood at this rank. In regards to this, referring to her as very high ranked seemed to be only proper.

After leaving the church Luru said to Iris.

” … What do you think?” (Luru)

“Do you mean it is not conclusive enough? … It was a strange story,

indeed. I think history wasn't passed down correctly." (Iris)

"It may be inevitable though as thousands years passed already …" (Luru)

While stating this, Luru was somehow not fully convinced of it either though. However, to only cover this little amount of information after asking the priestess made comprehension difficult.

Besides investigating any further than this, even if it was weighing on one's mind, was not possible in this city. After judging this to be the conclusion for now, Luru proposed returning to the hotel to Iris.

Besides, the curtain of night had descended already and you could see the stars peacefully twinkle in the night sky.

"I am feeling quite hungry." (Iris)

Iris declared while putting on a smile, Luru also,

"Ah, that's right … If Bacchus were here though, he would have likely mentioned sake." (Luru)

He retorted.

Is it because he had seen that statue? Memories of their past began to stir within him. However, he was a friend Luru couldn't meet any longer.

Even so, Luru decided to drink some good sake to mourn his friend's passing.

Luru was thinking about such matters.

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At another place outside the city walls of Finale, the flame of a campfire was crackling. One lonely woman sat by the fire. It was the priestess who talked with Luru earlier.

"… However, those two brats seemed to be rather interesting." (-)

Though there was no one besides the priestess there, a deep hoarse voice belonging to a sturdy man resounded.

"Oh well … I doubt we will meet again though because I am heading towards the royal capital. Don't you think so, my other self?" (Priestess)

The woman felt the firm resolve in the voice and thus answered him.

"Hee … Good grief, you are quite whimsical, huh? If you felt like it, we could be in the royal capital right away. Only because you enjoy camping in the wild, we have to continues this method of travelling.

In my case, I am always in the royal capital. No matter where we are, it is the same anyway, don't you think?" (Male)

"… Therefore. For me … I am not looking for anything in that neighbourhood." (Priestess)

"What is it" (Male)

Hi hi hi, while the male voice was laughing, the priestess heaved a sigh and gave such an unusual answer.

“Even though I understand … It is exhausting so can you stop saying such things?” (Priestess)

However, without being discouraged by the disgusted voice of the woman, the male voice continued to appeal to her.

“… In order to enjoy a nice conversation, won’t you let me accompany you for a little bit?” (Male)

But the woman didn’t respond. Shaking her head she sneered at her other self.

“You reap what you sow. But …” (Priestess)

The woman continued.

“Well … since I am free right now I guess you can accompany me for now …” (Priestess)

“Ohhhh, I thank thee.” (Male)

Like that, the back and forth between those two continued as if there was no end in sight at all.

Upon dawn the next day, there was no one to be seen at that place anymore. Only the remains of the fire were left.

Most likely the priestess started her journey towards her objective. The place she headed for being some remote frontier village.

Nothing else was known.

Chapter 23 – Royal Capital Desielt ∗

After a 7 year time-skip and a few chapters…

“You can see it now, Ojisama!”

Said Iris turning to face him, after peering out from the canopy of the carriage.

Her red eyes sparkled from the light of the midday sun, and her silver hair floated about in the wind.

It had been a few days since they left the ashen stone walls of that city, and Luru and Iris were headed to the royal capital.

They could see it not too far away, a much larger, and more colourful and metropolitan town compared to Finále.

It was unmistakably the royal capital, and was the first metropolis that Luru and Iris had laid their eyes upon since coming to this era.

Finále turned out to be a town where all sightseeing could be finished in a day, and they departed from it as a matter of course, so it felt like they left without really seeing anything.

This time the desire to properly have a look about throbbed in his heart.

“Everybody is in that city, huh… Gran, Yuumis, Rusty, Mii, Yuuri…

Everybody…”

Muttered Luru as he felt deeply moved for some reason at the sight of the city in the distance.

When he did, Iris nodded and said,

“Indeed. Normally Otousama would be there as well, but he is still on holiday in the village… We will probably meet him here one day as well, won’t we?”

“Otousan, huh? …Well, he works for the royal palace, so he probably won’t come into contact with adventurers like us, though. We can probably meet him on a day off, though.”

And like that, their horse carriage arrived at the city.

They arrived at a city gate that was incomparably larger than Finále’s, and it was hard to even imagine how much effort was needed to open and close it.

“The gate opens and closes with a Magus Tool, you know.”

Said the coachman in reply.

Indeed, now that they looked at it closely, they could see lines of mana in some configuration inside the gates.

The configuration was simple, but when you considered that all it needed to do was open and close the gates, it was plenty.

However, the efficiency was extremely bad, and probably even a magician of Yuumi’s class would be quite exhausted after just opening

and closing it.

When they asked about it, it turns out that it was created just a little while after the founding of the country, and this was the limit of the technology in the day.

In modern times when Magus Machines were starting to appear on the market, they might have been able to create something a little better, but the reason they didn't do so was because of the budget, as well as the historical significance of the gate.

They didn't want to destroy the gate with its noble history, in other words.

And actually, because it was a Magus Tool that only needed to be opened in the the morning, and closed at night, they didn't really feel the need to replace it.

Luru and the other two chatted about this while waiting in the line before the gates.

There were a great many people and carriages lined up before the city gates, and it didn't seem that they would be able to enter in just a few minutes.

"Today seems more packed than usual, huh... I wonder if something happened."

Said the coachman, as he tilted her head.

Then, a woman who seemed to be a resident of the city was about to pass by them, when the coach called out to her.

"Could you spare a little time, perhaps?"

The woman turned to face him.

Looking closely, she was wearing armour made from monster fur, and at her hip hung a rapier.

It seems that she was an adventurer woman.

She frowned a little at being accosted, but it wasn't as though she was particularly unhappy about it.

Tilting her head, she asked,

"What is it?"

Her voice held power that came from the depths of her stomach, and it was intense enough that you felt a little shocked at suddenly being spoken to.

It wasn't as though she was a battle maniac, but it seems that she really was the type that liked strength.

"Ahh, I just had a little question, you see… It's quite crowded today, so I was wondering if something was going on."

Being told this, the woman looked at the line and nodded in assent.

"Ahh… They probably came to see that."

"That?"

The coachman tilted his head in confusion.

Luru was curious as well, and started listening in on the conversation.

Just what on earth was that?

The woman continued.

“Just recently, a low class, but still rather large fire dragon was subdued, you see. They’re carrying the corpse in and holding a dismantling performance. And pretty flashily too; they’re doing it in the central plaza, and even normal guests are invited, you see.”

At her words, the coachman’s eyes widened in shock.

“A fire dragon!? That’s quite amazing… Even in the whole wide capital, I didn’t think there were many who could do something like that. I wonder if the capital is filled with more talent than I expected.”

Said the coachman, with interest.

However, the woman shook her head at his words.

“No, it’s as you say. Those who can do such a thing are pretty rare… But if it’s the top class adventurers, that’s a different story. After all, there are quite a few capable people in Desielt right now. In particular, the guys at the Seekers of the Ages{Elam Kupidor} are quite the popular topic these days. The clan leader Gran, and the subleader Yuumis are quite the thing, but the newcomers are doing pretty well too, you see. I’m quite looking forward to their growth… Well, the ones who killed the fire dragon were Gran and Yuumis though.”

Said the woman, looking somewhat delighted.

“Hehh, I see… Thank you. I understand perfectly now. Sorry for taking up your time. It’s not much, but this is my thanks.”

Said the coachman, before taking the woman’s hand, and dropping a silver coin in it.

The woman’s eyes widened a little and she said,

“…How rare. You’re a travelling merchant, aren’t you? Merchants who do this kind of thing are pretty rare these days, but…”

“I think relationships are important.”

“Hohoh[-impressed sound-]… I see. Got it. I’m Himeros of the Nuns{Manaka}. Remember me. If you ever need an adventurer for something, I’ll take it up.”

“Ohh, thank you for that… Well then, see you again someday.”

“Yeah, see you again… You kids in the back, too.”

With that, the woman, Himeros, headed towards inside the city with a smile on her face.

After they couldn’t see her anymore, Luru said to Iris,

“…Gran and everybody sure have been keeping at it, huh.”

“Yes… It seems so. However, I do feel a little bit that if this congestion was because of them, I’d have preferred if they had done it yesterday, or tomorrow…”

While looking at the line that seemed to go on forever, Iris said, and sighed.

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“Welcome to Royal Capital Desielt!”

The line before them leading into the city was finally dealt with, and by the time they heard these words from the guard soldier, the day was already darkening, and the madder red sun could be seen in the distance.

Whilst the carriage advanced along the main street of the capital, Luru was thinking that it was a shame that the day would end with just finding an inn.

“Even though I was thinking that we’d finally get to sightsee in a human city…”

Sighed Luru, to which Iris smiled and replied,

“If you think about it carefully, we demons have never set foot in a human city, have we? …In those days, they were properly protected with a holy barrier, and if you were going to enter, somebody small like me would have had to be prepared to be vaporised, but…”

“It was the same for me. After all, barriers like what Yuumis used are no comparison with the barriers the humans used in the old days, huh… To begin with, even the fundamentals were different, so I guess that much is obvious though.”

In the past, large human cities would unfailingly be clad in a holy barrier.

However, they hadn’t seen such a thing in this era even once.

Strictly speaking, it wasn’t as though they couldn’t see the remaining vestiges of it, but if it were things of a scale that could annihilate an ancient demon, then they hadn’t seen one even once.

“…The demon race has declined, as have the humans. Just where on earth did the glorious civilisation that drove us to the brink disappear to…?”

Muttered Iris, as she gazed into the distance.

Luru held the same question in his heart.

Though they couldn’t match the demon race when it came to Magus Machines, having said that, had they used all of their technology, the humans had once possessed even the ability to produce weapons powerful enough to destroy the demon king.

Though this was the case, that technology could now even be said to be non-existent, and they held nothing but primitive technology that you could feel a type of peacefulness from.

It was mysterious.

However, right now Luru and Iris held not even a hint that could lead them to an answer.

“I wonder if we’ll find out if we research it… Should we head to the library tomorrow?”

Muttered Luru, as he thought back on the past.

Iris however, spoke as though to butt into Luru’s train of thought.

“No, perhaps we should become adventurers first… Ah, but perhaps Gran-san and Yuumis-san’s clan comes before that…”

“Ah, now that you mention it, that’s right.”

Now that she mentioned it, he realised that he had completely forgotten, and suddenly smiled.

“Gran-san and Yuumis-san, and Rusty and the others as well would be sad if they found out you forgot, Ojisama.”

Said Iris, and Luru replied in a lonesome voice,

“I wonder about that. Don’t they seem to be having a surprising amount of fun…?”

Iris seemed a little shocked at that expression, and then spoke with a smile.

“…Could it be that you’re feeling lonely, Ojisama? From what we heard,

it seems that they are doing quite well, after all."

Iris' guess was dead on, and pouting, Luru replied,

"…I mean, they subdued a fire dragon, you know. We were left aside… It's really envious."

"The ones who killed the fire dragon were Gran-san and Yuumis-san though… Huhu…"

After saying that, Iris laughed, and Luru tilted his head in confusion.

"Why are you laughing?"

"No, it is just that… Ojisama, you were quite cute."

"Eh…?"

"My apologies… I do not often see you acting like this, so I felt it fresh… The Ojisama that I knew was the head of the demon race, and always exuded a mighty and dignified charisma, and was always completely looked up to… You were such an immensely popular leader. However… Right. I'm sure it was because father often saw this cute side of you… that he was able to act in such a manner around you."

Iris spoke, as though suddenly realising something.

Because her prediction was more or less on the mark, Luru knit his eyebrows together.

“That guy played with me since a long time ago, after all…”

“I am sure that he knew that you were somebody fun to tease…”

Bacchus.

Certainly Luru felt that they had such a relationship.

The fact that in this era Bacchus had become known as an apostle of the church, or a saint of the church or something, sort of felt like it was a prank on Luru.

But well, he probably wouldn’t go that far to tease Luru…

There was probably some meaning to him being worshipped like that.

And this was something that Luru wanted to investigate…

So thought Luru.

“We’re almost at the inn.”

While they were deep in conversation, it seems that they had almost reached the inn they would be staying at.

Tomorrow, the coachman would be departing from the capital, and this time would be headed to villages in the opposite direction to Luru’s to commence his travelling merchant job, so today would be the last time they would be together.

From tomorrow, they would have to find an inn by themselves.

Thinking this, certainly, rather than the library or whatever, it was more important to look for Gran and the others, or register as adventurers first.

While considering this calmly, he once again realised his festive mood.

They arrived at the inn, and whilst alighting from the carriage, Luru spoke to Iris.

“Tomorrow, first of all, let’s head to Gran and the others.”

And upon hearing this, Iris nodded and replied,

“I ‘m looking forward to meeting Mii and Yuuri.”

The reason that Luru didn’t tsukkomi with a ‘No Rusty?’ was not really because he had forgotten about him again.

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akaneiro 茜色（あかねいろ）is always in the dictionary as ‘madder red’. However, though sunsets are said to be akaneiro in Japanese, sunsets are of course not madder red at all. This makes me wonder just who on earth decided that 茜色 was madder red, as I’m sure there are plenty of other colours that suit this better. Could it just be a poetic thing? That sunsets aren’t actually madder red, but Japanese people are just used to the concept of ‘a madder red sunset’ and just say it as a phrase, no matter if it’s actually vermillion or orange? I’m not sure. At least when it comes to things outside of sunsets, certainly 茜色 things are often madder red, but… Anyway, the point is that the sunset that they see may or may not be madder red. It may perhaps just be a stock phrase, and the true colour of the subset may actually have been orange or some other colour. I am aware that this has no real relevance to the plot.

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huhuhu is a chuckling sound. Indeed, chuckling actually does sort of sound like ‘huhuhu‘. I am unsure why English laughter is limited to hahaha, hehehe, and hohoho but I have decided this is not a matter of ‘weeaboo or not’, but simply the fact that English laughter sounds are dreadfully lacking. You may have seen this written as ‘fufufu’ in other media.

‘somebody fun to tease…‘ からかいがいがある means that there’s merit in teasing them, *i.e.* you’ll get a rise, or a cute reaction out of them. Thus, からかいがいのある人 refers to such a person.

/Chapter 23 END

Chapter 24 – Clan Headquarters

“Eto … is this the place we are supposed to go to?” (Iris)

While checking the map of the royal capital, Iris was at a loss.

The streets of the Royal Capital were boisterous, filled with the bustling voices of peddlers. The siblings couldn’t help but stare inadvertently at the liveliness of the place.

There were many houses made out of brick lined up along the street, giving the impression of being built on a sturdy foundation. Most likely those wouldn’t break easily.

Occasionally there were magical gimmicks installed on houses. Possibly those were the homes of the wealthy, or maybe in some way property of a larger organization as one would expect from such exterior.

You could immediately guess that such remarkable craft wouldn’t be cheap to come by. Rumors were that it was a kind of luxury item with the objective to protect important facilities.

“Eee~ … according to the map, this should be the right place … kind of. After all it is our first time visiting this city. Somehow I am not quite sure …” (Iris)

The map of the city was delivered together with the letter from Rusty and was sent by Gran. It marked down various important facilities along

the main street and additionally listed the location of the clan of Gran's group.

In a space in the right-upper corner of the map there was written in large round red words to visit the clan headquarters first after arriving in the capital.

"Even though we came this far already …" (Luru)

Unconsciously murmuring such words, even though it couldn't be helped in such circumstances.

"Back in the old times such a thing wouldn't have happened. Thanks to becoming part of the human race Oji-sama obtained a rather libertine nature, isn't that true? In reality, yesterday we spent all day sightseeing as priority …" (Iris)

"If you put it like this." (Luru)

As I smiled wryly, Iris began to laugh.

To be truthful though, it is not like becoming a human suddenly changed my character completely but rather because the heavy pressure called demon king was lifted from me, I think?

Or is it because I decided to live my life freely?

In his previous life Luru wasn't able to bring forth his curiosity and

selfishness almost reaching the point of appearing to have a relatively meek character.

Of course, before he died, he was in an occupational position bearing responsibility thus he had to suppress himself and was expected to do so by his surroundings. Since now he didn't need to do that, not suppressing his nature has become natural.

That's why Iris probably felt that Luru's character had changed.

However, since Iris didn't try to particularly fix this and seemed to enjoy life with such Luru, there was no problem at all.

"... oh, isn't it this place?" (Luru)

While walking, Luru compared the building in front of them with the location indicated on the map, he was somehow convinced that this place was their destination.

One could say it was very nostalgic, as the architecture of the building was erected using the same principles as in the old days.

It was a large splendid 5-story building endowed with a big and heavy entrance door. Above the entranceway hung a slightly rusted silver plate stating "Seekers of the Ages – Elam ▪ Kupidor." It would appear the entire building belonged to the clan.

The exterior was made of stone which was quite worn out as one could see the marks of deterioration due to old age upon approaching it. The

color of the building had also faded already in comparison to the adjacent buildings.

Still, strangely it didn't feel out of place at all, or more precisely the declined state seemed just right. Even though being worn-out it appeared to be temptingly comfortable, giving off the ambiance of an exquisite place.

"This really seems like … it could collapse any time. On a closer look though, there is a rather intricate magic spell woven in. It gives off the color of Yuumis.

Haha … at least it emits a skillful disposition. Though, is it sufficient?" (Iris)

Iris said while gazing intently at the exterior of the building and furthermore, seeing through it, inspecting the interior with a glance.

Going around the building and looking at the composition of the magic concealed within the exterior, Luru followed Iris example and examined the building.

Certainly, just as Iris said, minor details regarding the efficiency of Yuumis' spell are lacking in the characteristics of the magical composition.

But going by the buildings we saw before coming here, the magic used is certainly sophisticated and powerful. Thus pointing out the flaws might be strict and speaking rather harshly.

“Maaa~ … putting that aside, I have no doubt this is the right place. Shall we enter?” (Luru)

Like that Iris and Luru entered the building together.

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“Only the outside is worn-out, huh?” (Luru)

Unexpectedly, upon entering inside you could see that the interior design was made properly. You wouldn’t be able to guess such an atmosphere considering the state displayed outside.

And then, the first thing entering one’s view drawing your attention was the part of the first floor that had completely all walls removed, almost like a bar.

There were chairs and tables spread in the entire room. In the back you could see a counter where numerous sake bottles were lined up.

Is this really the headquarters of a clan, is what I want to ask.

To begin with, Luru’s group came here to visit Gran and the others, but in such circumstance he had no idea where the heck he should go to.

Reluctantly he decided to look around himself. Just as he wondered if someone generous would be searching for them, someone came

downstairs from the second floor.

"Ohh … customers? Yes, yes, who is it desuka~ ?" (-)

Like that, they could hear a slow voice together with the sound of someone noisily (T/N: dota~ dota~) descending the stairs.

In front of Luru's group appeared a girl who was for some reason in an absentminded state. She was probably slightly older than Luru.

However, the eyes had a blank and drowsy look. The expression on her face certainly was off.

Laughing hollowly her smiling face emitted an atmosphere of carelessness. Very likely she was a difficult person to deal with … Somehow, this sort of woman caused the siblings to think she was a fraud.

In itself her appearance was pleasant to look at, calling her a beauty was not too far-fetched at all. Her figure was well proportioned, too, causing one to be spellbound by its loveliness.

However due to her unkempt braids, the plainly shaped glasses and her questionable western-style clothes the impression she exuded had an exactly opposite effect.

Coming here for the first time, is it alright to be welcomed by such a person?

Luru thought while looking at the woman in front of him

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“Heee~ … Gran-san’s group did mention it, you two are certainly unusual. Although I thought you people would emit a stronger aura~” (-)

After all one shouldn’t rely on the first impression. This woman was surprisingly levelheaded.

She held both roles of being the caretaker of the clan <Seekers of the Ages – Elam ▪ Kupidor> and master of the bar.

Judging by their countenance she figured out that Luru and Iris hadn’t eaten lunch yet and thus unexpectedly took out some skilfully prepared dishes.

Tasting the food, Luru was astonished as it was very delicious and made him crave for more.

And yet only common ingredients were used, or rather, because she just used general items to produce such magnificent dishes her skill undoubtedly was the real deal.

Gran had hired some really excellent staff, Luru wanted to praise such discerning eye of ones character.

It would appear she is called Chiffon. (T/N: After like 10 hrs of weird explanation, he finally got to the name…)

Tentatively speaking she also was an adventurer. Although because of her odd way to fight, that description didn't really fit her either.

"I am very happy that you are enjoying the meal~ .

I am sorry but Gran-san's group as well as Rusty-kun's group are both currently not here~. Gran-san's group is preparing for the fire drake dismantlement show while Rusty-kun's group is off on a request in a slightly remote region." (Chiffon)

According to her story, usually at this period of time the members of <Seekers of the Ages – Elam・Kupidor> would be eating their lunch at the bar.

But since the preparation of the fire drake dismantlement show was quite hectic, they were all out in order to help.

Rusty's group is tackling an entirely different matter and unfortunately we won't be able to meet them for quite a while.

"Though I was told that Luru-kun and Iris-chan would come here, I expected you to need a bit longer before actually arriving. The plans went a bit awry.

But that's fine.

In a little while the fire drake dismantlement show will start. Let's go watch it.

As the bar is empty anyway, it will be alright to close up for today~." (Chiffon)

As she declared this, she washed the plates we used for eating and put them back into the shelf.

Before one became aware of it, she had left the building beckoning the siblings to follow her.

"... What a surprising skill, huh?" (Luru)

As Luru uttered those words with a hint of jest blended in, Iris answered

"She is stronger than Rusty at least though." (Iris)

Certainly I can agree with her on this point.

Being deceived by her happy-go-lucky1 nature, the movement she just showed is one of a professional soldier.

She didn't seem to possess any magical ability, thus it was obvious that she was a genuine fighter relying on her physical strength in combat.

Luru laughed as in reality her appearance didn't match with this at all.

After that the three of them walked together towards the central plaza.

"Quite the crowd here." (Iris)

Iris muttered while looking at the flood of people coming and going from the main street to the central plaza.

Same as Iris, Luru observed the people walking on the main street. It was plain as daylight that most of them were heading towards the same destination; the central plaza.

"Everyone wants to see the dismantling of the fire drake~ .

A dragon is rarely seen after all. Much less the dismantlement of one. Such a scene is the real attraction~."

Dragons were strong creatures already existing while Luru reigned as demon king. But their strength varied depending on the type. Not all of them were strong just because they were dragons either.

The truly low class dragons were limited to a length of 60 centimetres and too weak to fly in the sky. Their subjugation was easy, too.

However, the fire drake Gran's group had slain was a full-fledged member of the dragon race with a powerful aptitude even if it was affiliated with the lower class of dragons.

Furthermore, as it gathered experience over the years it developed into a mighty warrior.

Where the subjugation of such a drake is concerned, it was only natural for it to become a hot topic within the city.

As it was impossible for common citizens to hunt such prey by themselves, they wanted to see such a being in its natural state at least once in their lives. Such an attitude was easy to understand.

It certainly was a smart move to make an entertainment out of it.

"One ticket costs 3 silver coins. We sold out completely~. The pursue of the clan benefited from this nicely~." (Chiffon)

Chiffon murmured with a dim voice while emitting a black aura.

Still, Luru's group needed tickets as they didn't possess any.

Just then Chiffon took out 3 papers from between her breasts2 and passed one each to Luru and Iris.

"... Fire drake dismantlement show, Special Seat, One gold coin ... is written on it" (Iris)

Iris declared staring at the ticket intently.

It would appear good seats were rather expensive.

You could call it shrewd business sense, huh?

“… Will Gran be the one dismantling it?” (Luru)

Instead of the longsword Gran had always used, the painting on the ticket pictured him with a gigantic halberd. You could sense the sharpness required to cut through especially tough material from it.

There is a slight feeling of glorification pertaining the painting, but since it is a show it is to be expected, huh?

As Yuumis is not included in the painting, she doesn’t take part in the show. Maybe there is no need for her to appear publicly.

As he was bothered by it, he asked Chiffon

“Yuumis-san will put up a barrier~.

As one should expect, a lot of blood will splash about. Furthermore it can get dangerous if the severed parts are sent flying.

Oh well, there is no need to worry though as a magic tool will be used to recover the drake’s blood.” (Chiffon)

It was a fairly huge drake after all. Thus it meant the fire drake depicted in the painting next to Gran was reduced in scale to fit in.

Such a forethought was certainly needed.

Before long the queue was jammed.

The central plaza was close by now.

Since neither Luru nor Iris were tall enough they couldn't comprehend how close they were.

Standing on tiptoe and stretching his back to make himself somehow taller, Luru tried to look in the direction of the central plaza.

Chiffon abruptly grabbed Luru under his armpits and lifted him into the air.

"Can you see it~?" (Chiffon)

Although Luru was surprised by the sudden action, he now was able to see well in front him.

Apparently the crowd of people in the queue would end a little further ahead. Tearing off the tickets at he ticket-collector's stand took time which caused the flow of people to jam.

The central plaza itself still had sufficient space left. It was unlikely that there would be no room left to the extent that they wouldn't be able to squeeze in.

Moreover, after an examining look, one could see that the front row of the central plaza was populated scarcely leaving plenty of room. Most likely this were the seats costing 1 gold coin.

"Aah … I can see it. Sorry for having you lift me up. It's fine now." (Luru)

Luru was put down.

Afterwards Chiffon lifted Iris in the same manner as Iris' face had expressed the desire to be treated likewise.

"… After all, watching from a high place is enjoyable." (Iris)

As she was raised into the air, such words could be heard.

Even though Luru had a fear of heights, this kind of height was okay. But he didn't want to think about advancing even higher than that.

Iris' words though had a different kind of quality within them, judging by the brief comment.

Someday I intend to make a flight apparatus.

He intended to board such a machine someday as they were getting closer to completion in the present era. Thus Luru decided to cure his acrophobia by then.

Translation Notes

1 – I didn't find a proper word to explain her countenance. In Romaji it was "howa howa." I think the pictures here should be sufficient explanation. https://store.line.me/stickershop/product/1014136/en

2 – Yea, just like Oriana Thompson. Heck, you can imagine Chiffon as Oriana, just loose the onee-sama character and insert Orsola Aquinas character.

Chapter 25 – Fire drake Dismantlement

『You lot, quite a few of you have gathered here. Ooohhh！！』(Gran)

Gran's loud voice resounded in the central plaza.

The fire drake dismantlement show began with such an announcement. Observing the vicinity, you could see that the plaza was in a state of extreme prospering.

Sitting at the front, Luru turned his head back towards the people in the plaza who came to watch Gran. Watching the crowd of onlookers gazing it was almost like a sea of people. The scenery of the city itself one expected to spread in the back was almost completely hidden from view.

Spreading in the center of the plaza, there was a stage which appeared to have been constructed hastily with improvised preparation.

On top of the stage a truly huge corpse of a fire drake was laid out.

In order to hide it from view before the show started, it was covered with an enormous cloth.

Upon removing that cloth, the audience roared in booming loud shouts of joy and excitement.

Seeing the size of the fire drake, one had to be surprised how the heck they had been able to carry in such a large build probably spanning a

length of 15 meters.

According to Chiffon, apparently a huge company, which possessed the necessary space storage1 to squeeze in a fire drake of such magnitude, had this time accepted their request to bring it in.

Under usual circumstances there was no other choice but to dismantle such huge fire drake on spot and transport it in parts though.

If one had such convenient thing as space storage though, they would be able to bring it along as it is.

“Space storage … Iris, do you have it?” (Luru)

In order to avoid Chiffon listening in, Luru dropped the volume of the voice and furthermore isolated it by casting wind magic upon those possibly able to hear it.

“No, I don’t possess it … As far as I can remember only a few army forces were equipped with it. I think it’s safe to believe it to be scattered and lost in the present time now.” (Iris)

Luru became discouraged by the reply.

Having that, would have made various matters concerning transport more comfortable.

More or less it was possible to make something closely resembling it,

but the quantity it would be able to hold inside would doubtlessly be little.

Both, crafting skill and materials, were insufficient. As a matter of fact, the technology to produce space storage was a technology which originally belonged to the ancient demons.

Be that as it may, only someone like a professional crafter was able to make a high quality article.

If Luru were to make it, the item quality would definitely drop in the end. Just because he knew the theory behind something, it didn't mean he was able to perfectly reproduce whatever he liked.

The production is simple and easy on the necessary materials for something as small as the magic gun <Magia・Pistola>, however in regards to a space storage capable of holding something with the magnitude of a huge fire drake it wasn't such a simple matter at all.

For the time being there was no other way but to give up on it.

"I think there is no need to be embarrassed over one of the size of an average bag though, but ..." (Iris)

Iris muttered while lifting her bag.

It was the space storage Luru had produced. Although it was not large, there was a lot more space for items compared to a common bag for sure.

Certainly, it was a fact that there was no need to be overly embarrassed if only considering the bag.

Besides Iris, Luru held onto one too and he had incidentally prepared several for Gran's group as well.

I am very pleased with the fine quality, he was thinking. However, mass-production is not possible after all.

At any rate, the part which should be called the heart of the bag, was actually recycled from the remains of the magic capsule in the ancient ruins which Iris had used for her cold sleep.

To imitate the magic gun <Magia・Pistola>, one had to ponder whether it was safe to assume that there were advanced magic devices in this world.

However, since an ample amount of vast funds wasn't available, the recycling of artifacts found in ancient ruins might be the only choice to obtain the necessary materials.

Making a magic gun <Magia・Pistola> from the scratch was not impossible, however when it came down to the extent of a flight apparatus it was unreasonable as one would expect.

After becoming an adventurer, I want to put my effort into discovering and excavating this type of ruins, Luru thought.

While pondering such things, suddenly the cheers in the vicinity erupted.

Apparently the fire drake dismantlement had started.

Above the stage Gran had put on an apron for protection against the slippery raw materials.

Holding the naginata2 in his right hand, he stared intently at the fire drake corpse.

『Well then, after this you will get to see the dismantlement of the fire drake! Once the dismantlement is finished, I declare that all the meat will be prepared into a dragon stew and spread to everyone here. Thus, if you fellows want to eat that, you have to stay until the end!』 (Gran)

As Gran announced this, he brandished the halberd.

Although the drake was dead already, its impact hadn't diminished in the least.

There was no light of glaring left in its eyes and the scale had lost all feeling of vitality. Yet even so, the magic power residing within its body hadn't vanished at all. Thus one wouldn't be able to cut it that easily if you considered the certain extent of firmness.

However, Gran was already stretching. He has strong arms indeed.

Brandishing the naginata greatly, it penetrated at the back of the neck of the drake without a hint of hesitation.

Without making as much as a sound it finished piercing as is.

*Ping*3 The pointed edge of the naginata shook as it struck the ground and remained right next to the severed head as if it was no less than one would expect.

The skill differed in some way from the generally used broadsword4, but that didn't seem to be a problem either.

"Excellent cutting quality, that blade …" (Luru)

Luru murmured while watching the appearance of the skilfully and efficiently cut dragon.

Thereupon Chiffon said from the side,

"That peculiar weapon is referred to as "Katana"5~ .

It seems to be a striking weapon for which master sword smiths were called from the east and the most-talented craftsmen were gathered.

Its distinctive feature is its sharpness. Please look at the drake's neck." (Chiffon)

One could see after examination that it had the visible appearance of an extremely clean and smooth cut. The cut wound of occasionally using a regular sword on similar objects was completely different.

The stream of blood originating from the severed neck of the drake, which should by all rights scatter on the siblings, didn't hit them at all.

Across the entire stage there was a huge invisible barrier spread. The splashing blood hit the barrier walls without ever reaching the audience.

Moreover, as the blood flowed uneventfully onto the ground it was drawn towards the bucket shaped container placed behind Gran and absorbed into the inside.

"What is that? ..." (Iris)

Iris asked Chiffon.

"It is a magic tool.

The drake's blood is needed as an ingredient for a first-class medicine~ . Furthermore it can be used as cooking ingredient of high value and sometimes even as a catalyst to be inserted into armor as well. Therefore, as to not waste a single drop, it is gathered like this~ .

Originally it was intended as magic tool to collect water from moisture in areas where it scarcely rains. Because this kind of usage is possible too~ ..." (Chiffon)

Dragons were called a magnificent raw material as from meat to bone as well as blood everything could be used without having to throw away a single thing.

In the old times it also was common knowledge that its parts had various advantages however unusual those were.

The people of the human race used it often in their armor as well.

In those times people of the human race frequently went to hunt dragons.

Thinking about the many powerful dragons, it is good that they didn't go extinct. This probably also originates from the fact that too much greed often caused heavy losses on the hunter's side. Even if they had treated the demons as allies, excessive hunting would have been difficult.

And then the fire drake dismantlement was over.

All materials had been torn off and divided. Large quantities of meat and scales, and moreover fangs, eyes, horns, blood and bones.

Really everything had been securely processed and was lined up on the stage.

Since the audience had seen the entire dismantlement from beginning to the end, they were satisfied as well.

Gran who almost single-handedly did the entire processing received a standing ovation.

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After that, things such as saucepans and other ingredients were brought onto the stage turning it into an impromptu kitchen. Out of nowhere a group resembling cooks appeared. They took some of the materials of the dismantled fire drake and several other ingredients and began to prepare the food.

As I looked at my side, Chiffon had vanished before I even noticed it.

『Saa~ , next the dragon stew will be prepared! Everybody, I will put all my skills into cooking. Enjoy it~ !! 』(-)

It was announced on top of the stage in a loud voice.

The announcer put a frilly heavily used apron with a lovely design on and placed a chef's hat on top of her head while smiling briskly as a very adorable chef.

"Chiffon-chan! Please marry me!"

"No, me"

"Of course with me!"

“I hope you will become my wife!”

From everywhere such voices like these could be heard.

Apparently she is a considerably popular person. Incidentally, the cheering towards the stage now rivaled the one Gran received while dismantling the drake.

Besides her, there was a large number of cooks assembled on top of the stage. Everyone appeared to be fairly skilled. Their manner of using their hands to handle the kitchen knives also showed no wasted movements at all.

Processing the cooking steps one by one without hesitation or accident, the food was finished at a steady pace.

As who-knows-how-many stockpots were gradually set atop the fire, a nice aroma drifted across the plaza.

“Oh … it looks delicious.” (Luru)

“That is true … Hey, that’s free of charge, isn’t it? ” (Iris)

Luru muttered while sniffing with his nose *kunkun* and Iris followed up like this.

“Ah, its for free. Look and examine the size of the saucepans, it should

be sufficiently enough for everyone here, no?" (-)

The two of them turned their head towards the back where they had heard the voice. There they could see a face of someone they hadn't seen in a long time.

"Gran! You look quite healthy!" (Luru)

When Luru addressed him, he boasted a hearty smile and approached them.

"Ou, long time no see … Seeing the two of you in good health is the best above all! However, that is … I thought you would take a bit more time to get here, you been quite quick." (Gran)

Gran said so after having embraced Iris together with Luru.

"Oi, that hurts … let go." (Luru)

Luru uttered unconsciously. As expected of Gran's large build his embrace was suffocating.

Iris didn't resist as it didn't seem to be painful for her.

There was a fundamental difference in physical ability between people of the human race and demons. After all Luru had no more than a body of a 14-years old without using his body strengthening.

As Gran noticed it, he relaxed his hold.

“Ooops, my bad …” (Gran)

He said and Luru was freed.

“No, it’s okay. Putting that aside … come to think of it, where’s Yuumis?” (Luru)

Because they gave the impression of always acting as a pair, Luru, who felt an unusual doubt, inquired about the figure of the old elven race.

“She still keeps up the barrier in the back … Luru, you are different as you can maintain it from long distance. Something like that is not possible for her.” (Gran)

“Ah, I see …” (Luru)

Turning around to properly examine the area of the stage, he could see the barrier being maintained there.

Luru and Iris were to a certain extent able to maintain said barrier from a place further away. It appeared to be a very difficult feat for modern magicians to do so though.

“Even though Mii and Yuuri have no difficulties with separating from the magic once it has been cast …” (Iris)

Iris murmured so.

Those two were taught magic by Iris. Even if the foundation was based on modern magic, it used a totally different system in accordance to produce results. The range of usage was different as well.

“That is certainly so … When I saw it for the first time I was quite astonished, but … even though Yuumis is until this very day practicing to attain something similar, her common sense seems to hinder any progress. It is a matter that will still take quite some time.” (Gran)

Gran replied.

It could be called especially unexpected that Iris would experiment with trying to impart the technique onto Yuumis as well. She was considerably caring. The utilization of the ancient demon magic style was not that easy to be done.

While teaching Mii and Yuuri the style of the ancient demon magic, Yuumis also received lessons in it. However, while Mii’s group raised their strength conspicuously, Yuumis, in contrast, reached her limit without becoming accustomed to the style.

Nevertheless, Yuumis was overwhelmingly powerful whenever we did a mock battle. You can say without doubt that Yuumis probably caused this state by herself in her mind. Still, it is quite strange.

Even so, to completely not being able to do it for such reason is certainly not true. Given that she has mastered the style to some degree,

Yuumis has become stronger than before.

Just that there are several things Mii and Yuuri are able to do, whereas Yuumis is not. That's the difference.

Is this really a phenomenon only pertaining to Yuumis? Or is it the same for other modern magicians? As verifying this was not possible it remains ambiguous.

I fear that it's likely the same for others as well. Iris and Luru were pondering.

On the contrary, there was the possibility of not being able to use it at all after all.

Even though Luru's mother was capable of using magic, too, the magic language was obviously unnatural. The people using the aforesaid magic or in other words the majority of the human race were likely not able to use the ancient demon magic style.

The magic language suited Yuumis and she could use it without problems. Moreover after inquiring about it, the reason for this was her connection to the old elven race.

The way of using magic was different for the human race. Following this line of argumentation, Luru's and Iris' conclusion was very likely correct.

Considering the extreme decline of the human civilization, it was incomprehensible how the magic skill still became as remarkable.

“Oh well, let’s leave it at that … any time now the stew will be handed out. You got to eat it. Your stomachs are empty, right?” (Gran)

Saying it in that way, Gran showed the way towards the stage.

There, the cooks had finished cooking the dishes and each had taken a position standing in front of a huge stockpot. In the right hand they held a ladle and with their left hand they held tableware with a deep bottom which were prepared beforehand.

Apparently they were busy distributing the dishes in turns.

“Is it okay for me to stand in the line?” (Luru)

Upon Luru’s question Gran nodded.

After that the three companions along with others started to line up in a queue waiting for their turn to come.

On a side note, the longest line formed in front of Chiffon’s stand. The extent of her popularity was quite obvious.

According to Gran, the bar of the clan allowed common people as visitors as well. Chiffon’s appearance and skill were quite famous in the royal capital.

That being so, Luru and Iris nodded as they now understood the reason

for the long queue over at her stand.

The stew made out of the drake's raw materials was a exquisite dish making one eat it with relish.

Translation Notes :

1. Don't confuse it with the general idea of Inventory like space magic. It seems to be some kind of magic item providing the storage.

1. Check here for more information on the weapon.

1. びたり – According to jorgelotr: "being made to stop but still carrying the momentum for a while." Unfortunately I am not smart enough to put it into one sfx describing such complex action though. xD

1. "taiken" aka large sword/ long sword. But if you talk about severing dragon heads it has to be a broadsword, yep! In the first place no one can tell me that severing dragon heads is easily doable with one-handed long swords!

1. Refers to the blade part of the naginata.

Chapter 26 – Welcome Party And Whereabouts Of Rusty'S Group

After the fire drake dismantlement show ended, Luru's group returned to the headquarters of the clan.

And then the other clan members, who still were full of tension due to the show, rushed just like that into throwing a welcome party for Luru and Iris.

Postponing the cooking, they all crowded in the bar each of them holding a glass or a mug filled with some kind of alcoholic beverage.

"On the occasion of our new friends starting a new life! Kanpai!" (Gran)

Gran hoisted an ordinary mug containing ale into the air. At the same time the other people gathered in the bar similarly hoisted their mugs and glasses, clinking theirs with each other, as they cheered with a "Kanpai!" and thus welcomed Luru's group.

The clan <Seekers of the Ages – Elam ▪ Kupidor> was a large family. It wasn't just called one either.

It was a clan with a reasonable scale having quite a few adventurer's living together under one roof. The number of people standing in the bar was approximately a little less than 20 people.

Going by the rumors, when it came to large-scale clans they fielded as many as 100-200 members. Therefore you could call the scale of this clan

mid-sized. Nonetheless it was a splendid number of people who displayed an amazing enthusiasm.

The gender ratio felt to be around fifty-fifty and the race distribution seemed to be scattered all over as well.

Additionally there was the beast race Animasias1, who – similarly to the olden elf race to which Yuumis belonged – lived in secluded villages and were not often seen if at all.

It was a nostalgic race that had remained the same way as in the old days.

Like this many different kinds of races drank their alcoholic beverage together at the same location without a hint of discrimination.

Because of such an extremely queer situation, he was reminded by coincidence of the realization of one of his visionary dreams from back in his previous life.

Seeing this particular scene before his eyes, Luru was deeply moved emotionally by his memories for a slight moment of time.

Suppressing a smile, he gazed at the marvelous situation he chanced upon after many months and years.

“Yo, do you enjoy it?” (Gran)

Gran asked while approaching.

Next to him Yuumis came along wearing a slightly exhausted expression.

“You should enjoy it. Looking at you, you’re not laughing at all. Isn’t that so, Luru? It’s fun, no? It’s definitely fun!” (Yuumis)

It wasn’t comprehensible whether Yuumis’ tension stemmed from being angry or being in a good mood. Neither was it clear whether it was caused by her getting drunk or due to the exhaustion caused by spending a significant amount of mana during the dismantlement show.

Even so, she stayed next to such a huge barrier maintaining it for half a day after all. That skill was close in capacity to the greatest magician of this era.

“Ah, I do enjoy it. Although it was a bit sudden, receiving such a warm welcome is not bad at all.” (Luru)

Luru replied while smiling wryly.

However, his expression didn’t appear to be displeased in the least.

Exactly as he had stated with his words, he was enjoying himself.

Since the old days, rather than hating such occasions, he liked them and thus it could confidently be said that he truthfully had fun.

Relieved by hearing such words from Luru, Yuumis disappeared somewhere among the tables while singing merrily with a happy expression. In the distance you could see her repeating similar looking exchanges with other clan members.

She is a drunken.

Although Gran was drinking as well, he preserved his soberness for the time being and nodded with a serious expression.

“Then it’s fine … Although without Rusty’s group here, it feels a bit lonely. But, oh well, they will return tomorrow or the day after tomorrow.” (Gran)

Gran said with relief mixed in his voice. Feeling bothered by this scene of his childhood friends missing, Luru inquired,

“Come to think of it, what are they doing right now anyway?” (Luru)

“Request. It’s a request. Still, saying it like this, it is a difficult and designated request submitted by an acquaintance, but …” (Gran)

“Designated request?” (Luru)

Not used to hearing such word, Luru tilted his head to the side.

Gran followed with a nod.

“Since it has been decided that you two will become adventurers soon, too, I will teach you now. There are general requests and designated requests, which largely enclose the thing called request.”

I was aware that the work of the organization called adventurers based on the request system. However I don’t know much of the detailed process or more precisely I didn’t try to check up on it properly. Given that reason, Luru decided to earnestly listen to the explanation.

“To comprehend the general meaning … general request means that the addressee to complete it is not specifically assigned to the request. Meanwhile, for a designated request the addressee to complete it is a specific person and only a restricted group is allowed to go, to explain the circumstances in such way.

Furthermore talking about minor details, there is something called restricted general requests and something called unrestricted general request. Restricted general requests can only be appointed to adventurers of a certain rank while unrestricted general request can be appointed to anyone willing to take it.

Naturally such a restriction is unnecessary for a designated request, thus there is no such classification. Do you understand up to this point?” (Gran)

Saying it all in one go, Gran took a short break in talking.

After digesting those contents and affirming his understanding, Luru checked with a glance whether Iris had understood it as well.

Identically to Luru, Iris didn't seem to have any problems either.

"In brief, restricted general request, unrestricted general request and in addition designated request. Those are the names of the different kinds of requests with regards to the adventurer guild. Is that correct?" (Luru)

He summarized what he had gathered from Gran's explanation.

Gran nodded once. But since there was still more he continued.

"Well … there are designated request with no restriction, but those also are a completely different kind.

General designated requests and something called special designated request.

The former usually designates an individual adventurer and group for the request, however, for the latter the adventurer guild itself nominates a specific adventurer to take on the request, to explain the circumstances in such way." (Gran)

"I see … Because of that, there is nothing beyond such kind of request, or is there?" (Luru)

Thinking there might still be a continuation, Luru inquired about it.

Thereupon Gran nodded.

“Ah, up to here, there isn’t. For that reason it has been decided that there are those four kinds of requests, called: Restricted general request, unrestricted general request, general designated request and special designated request.

Well, the majority of requests submitted to the adventurer guild are general requests and general designated requests. The special designated requests are submitted only in rare occasions. Since a certain level of ability is required, it is natural that it has never been handed out with the exception for adventurers possessing unique abilities.

Particularly you might say this kind of request has absolutely nothing to do with newcomer adventurers considering their accumulated total of completed requests. However, while that may be true that doesn’t mean that it isn’t necessary to know about it.” (Gran)

“Why?” (Luru)

Luru inclined his head to the side expressing his curiosity.

If Gran’s explanation was correct, newcomers ought to have totally nothing to do with such requests. If that was the case, there was no particular need to mind them.

Also, concerning the unique abilities, while Luru and Iris might have those, he didn’t even intend to announce it publicly.

He believed to not be related to such requests.

Gran continued.

“It is difficult to decline a special designated request since a penalty will be imposed on you if you refuse. Such a thing has already happened in the past. Therefore, if you don’t properly consider it whether to accept or decline, it won’t result in anything good.

For the time being, it is essential to bear these circumstances in a corner of your mind.

By the way, there are various penalties. In the worst case it might turn into an expulsion punishment, thus you have to be very careful of such situations. Because of your rank, I am worried …” (Gran)

As Gran said that, he worriedly looked at Luru and Iris.

Expulsion punishment, considering it, it was quite harsh. Such punishment appeared to not be enforced by the adventurer’s guild unless the situation had the gravity of something like declining a special designated request.

Considering what was said, it was difficult to tell at which point the balance would shift to the worse.

The adventurer’s guild is an organization resembling a separate nation but practically without being bound by almost any laws.

Just because of such position, it didn't mean that there was no expectation neither though.

Especially concerning the activity of monsters, it was the adventurer's guild's constant duty to assess the situation. If there was a large outbreak of monsters, it was usually intercepted by a nation's knight order. In case the knight order failed, the adventurer's guild was apparently bound by its duty to contribute adventurers.

Occasionally a special designated request was submitted to participate in such an expedition, too. Gran had already experienced it a few times as well.

Therefore, thinking it definitely wouldn't be assigned to oneself was like avoiding reality.

Then Gran returned to his explanation concerning what Rusty's group had been up to.

"Well, because of that … in short, Rusty's group accepted a general designated request. Such is the situation. The client is the clan <Seekers of the Ages – Elam・Kupidor>." (Gran)

"What does that mean … ?" (Luru)

Receiving a request from the clan they belonged to? Even though it seems to be the case, why did they submit a request? Luru asked himself in a state of puzzlement.

“It is a request to run a small errand, or how should I put it … the other day three newcomers entered our clan. In spite of saying it like that, those three are kids of some of our clan members, but …” (Gran)

As Gran mentioned it, he looked towards a specific table within the bar.

There you could see two middle-aged men and a woman, appearing to be of the same ages as the two men, being seated.

Noticing Gran’s gaze, they hoisted their mugs in salutation.

“It’s their brats. So …” (Gran)

“Those children are the reason for the request?” (Iris)

Upon Iris’ inquiry, Gran shook his head.

“That’s not it. Those brats usually accept (T/N: unrestricted) general requests. For the first time they received a restricted general request which is intended for lower ranking adventurers.

However, that request, you know … harvesting medical herbs halfway up the Njörðr2 mountain. For those fellows … it’s a problem.” (Gran)

“… To what extent is it no good?” (Luru)

Harvesting medical herbs.

Given that it wasn't a subjugation of dangerous monsters, it could obviously be considered nothing else but a good first request of this kind.

However, after hearing Gran's next words, it was apparent that such a deduction was totally wrong.

"No, well, the harvesting of medical herbs in itself is fine. But, in spite of going halfway up the Njörðr mountain, still taking two days from there on?" (Gran)

"Ah … Is that so? It isn't a day trip's worth?" (Luru)

Gran nodded to Luru's comprehension of the issue.

"From the outset there were difficulties with the request, therefore they were told how to handle the harvesting of medical herbs. They were told to search the nearby forest at the most as it would be the most likely place to choose where you could expect to find the herbs. After becoming aware that they already accepted the request, they were told to leave the town." (Gran)

"And then, what happened next?" (Iris)

Being in an excited state, Iris badgered Gran to continue.

"Nothing really. Because it couldn't be helped, I requested Rusty's

group to pursuit and rescue them. Obviously they can't be found.

That being said, Rusty's group also has a livelihood to maintain, thus, no matter how much they belong to the clan, binding them to this request for several days in a row is bad, too.

Therefore I submitted a designated request and let them accept it. Such a roundabout procedure is no problem either.

Although it slightly exceeds overprotection, too … 'Until they become a fully grown adult we will take care of them' is kind of like a motto of our clan." (Gran)

And because of such circumstances Rusty's group is not here.

Luru and Iris nodded as they understood the situation.

"Well, Rusty's group was eager to meet you as well. Lately there haven't been many requests requiring them to leave the city, the timing simply was bad … including this apology, too" (Gran)

"Didn't Gran's group want to go looking for those children?" (Luru)

Luru asked what suddenly came into his mind.

If you were to talk about ability, Gran and Yuumis would still be far above Rusty's group.

If you want to pursue them because you are worried, you ought to be the one's going.

It doesn't seem like they are so busy with other matters.

Certainly, there was the fire drake dismantlement show to attend, but it's not like that particular dismantlement couldn't have been entrusted to someone else.

I have no doubt that Chiffon herself could have handled it just fine.

Gran answered the question of Luru.

"Although us going would have been fine, I considered the time after finding them.

I thought that rather than us going, Rusty's group was easier to tolerate if they went in this situation. Even if they are brats, they are still adventurers. They do have some pride after all.

In such cases, unless one does such things in secrecy … isn't that so? Moreover, please listen to this, Luru. Those kids, they are holding a higher respect towards Rusty's group than towards me." (Gran)

Due to this totally unexpected talk, Luru's mind became blank for an instant.

"Eh" (Luru)

That reaction caused Gran to laugh out loudly before continuing his story.

Getting more and more interested on the subject, the longer he listened to it, Luru's imagination rapidly got bigger within his mind.

Iris appeared to be the same, as her face barely contained her laughter.

"Well, you will see it once they come back. Because it is interesting.

Rusty's group are treated like aniki and aneki3 or something like that.

Oh well … it's not only those brats either, other new clan members show their respect towards Rusty's group in a similar manner.

By now it is has become a common scene to be seen in the royal capital.

Just that … because I have known them since they still were snotty-nosed kids … it's quite ridiculous, isn't it? *Kukku ku* …" (Gran)

Saying that, Gran gulped down the remaining ale in his mug in one go. Moreover he refilled the booze from a barrel just to drink it up again.

That group of Rusty, thinking of them being treated as aniki and aneki. To fully understand it, it probably was necessary to actually see it with one's own eyes or rather Luru and Iris wouldn't be satisfied unless they

had been shown that ridiculous scene.

Acquaintances proving themselves to be successful, becoming celebrities or such and being pampered by somebody, that is wonderful. Rather than displaying a crumpling, innocent smile, it was better to leave the scene and thus put an end to it.

Actually, at the time Luru became the demon king in his previous life, he remembered Iris' father Bacchus having an expression about to burst into laughter after seeing Luru's face.

It seems that the reverse of that time is about to happen to my own body.

While having such thoughts, Luru decided to prevent bursting into laughter even if he happened to see the actual scene of someone calling Rusty's group aniki or such things.

Imagining the situation of such scene unfolding before his eyes, he didn't believe it to be easy to stick to his decision at all though.

◆◇◆◇◆

The next day Luru and Iris were standing before the adventurer's guild.

Having a feeling that a lot had happened since they arrived at the royal capital, they felt like they finally managed to register.

The registration in itself didn't seem to take overly long. 'Go at it with ease' they had been told before setting off.

Since they had a letter of introduction from Yuumis and Gran and furthermore the clan admission agreement, their faces brimmed with confidence. Nevertheless there could be some problems.

For example, the adventurer's guild regarding them as a children, the matter of a minimum age to join the adventurer's guild turning up, themselves wishing to return to the village (T/N: homesick), such things as being cut out for another occupation and such being pointed out at the reception desk as it occasionally happened before, someone doubting the validity of the letter of introduction and troublesome arguing without joining the guild as member in the end.4

"Well then, standing around here forever won't solve anything. Let's go?" (Luru)

Luru said to Iris. In order to advance inside, he took his first step past the threshold.

Iris followed him and likewise entered the adventurer's guild.

Translation Notes:

1. アニマゼアス is the katakana name, I hope the given English name comes close to the one intended by the author.

I. It’s a name from Norse mythology, check it here

I. Aniki = “Bro”, Aneki = “Sis” … informal way to address someone you admire, also used to refer to fellow members of street gangs.

I. I love long sentences… here’s the original: 冒険者組合には、子供というか、冒険者組合に加入できる年齢の最低限でやってくる者に対して、自分の村に帰るように、とか他に向いている職業に就け、だとか言う受付と言うのがたまにいるらしく、紹介状があれば、そう言った者に対する対策と言うか、面倒なやりとりなしで加入できるらしい。Sometimes I do think the author should make Luru less paranoid. -.-;;

Chapter 27 – Misunderstanding And Consultation

The interior of the adventurer's guild building was surprisingly well-organized. The ambiance didn't give off the feeling of a place of rowdy fellows at all.

The first floor of the 3-story building was a huge single room with no partitioning walls in between. Close to the middle of the room there was a reception desk installed which visibly halved the room into two parts.

Within the reception service desk there was a space prepared for the adventurer's guild service staff on duty.

The reception desk itself was quite long. Along the desk line there were several counters categorized into registration service, request acceptance service, guild-made sales duty and raw materials submission service.

Considering the various classifications at the reception desk, this incomprehensible degree of desk length was probably quite necessary, too.

And then, at the side next to the reception desk, there was the adventurer's request bulletin board as well as a meeting area with couches placed within.

Additionally there was a cafe/bar space where one could eat light meals and drink sake.

Almost all of the possible needs of adventurers were sufficiently covered here.

"... First off we have to register at the reception." (Luru)

While reading each of the different classifications at the reception desk, Luru stated this.

"That's certainly true ... It seems to be over there, oji-sama" (Iris)

As he had such conversion with Iris, they advanced towards the reception desk.

Although the request acceptance service counter appeared to be swamped with work, the woman sitting at the registration service counter was riddled with boredom.

Watching her, she was weakly gazing into the empty air with hollow eyes.

Because of her not noticing them approaching either, Luru knocked on the desk *konkon* to start a conversation with her.

"... I would like to register" (Luru)

Thereupon the body of the girl sitting at the reception desk jumped up with a *biku*.

While being flustered, she took out who-knows-how-many documents from beneath the desk and began to stack them up.

From the fact that there were long ears extending down and dangling from within her chestnut-colored hair, it was certain that she was a member of the rabbit family of the beastmen race Animasias (T/N: >> Animazeasu <<).

Although she was slender, one ought to emphasize on the racial features of her figure asserting her affiliation.

Even though Luru didn't hold any particular feelings towards it, Iris eyes were fixated in displeasure on a certain part of the girl.

After the woman had finished stacking up the various documents, she handed the pile over to Luru.

"A-Ano, t-those … registration papers desu~" (Usagi-chan)

That way of talking was quite curt, or more precisely … apparently rather not accustomed to talking, such was the impression Luru felt.

As a matter of fact, that staff member was rather young in comparison to the others. Her age was rather close to Luru's and Iris'.

Probably a newcomer who just joined, Luru wondered.

For some reason Luru was reminded of his affinity of difference by this

newcomer as he received the documents with a smile.

“Thanks. Is it fine to only fill out the required data?” (Luru)

Obviously there was a portion for Iris, too. While handing Iris half of the documents splitting two sheets at a time, Luru inquired.

Iris began to properly read the documents she had received.

In response to Luru’s question, the girl stammered,

“T-Th-That’s r-right … etto, ano … oh yea, only writing the name and birthplace is fine as well …” (Usagi-chan)

Examining the documents with a glance, except name and birthplace there also were fields for special skills and fighting style.

In such case it was slightly difficult to tell what to write, thus he asked a question.

“That special skill and something like fighting style, that is to say, what would be fine to write there?” (Luru)

“Ah, it’s fine to leave it blank, too … In the case you use magic, or such things as research you are well-acquainted with … or something like swordsman style you use. In short writing something resembling your own sales point … that would be good.” (Usagi-chan)

“Sales point, huh? To whom am I advertising myself?” (Iris)

Wondered Iris as she listened in from the side.

“Because there are not few rookies who register by themselves, it is an easy way to promote themselves for parties or such things as clans … Based on the contents in that description, the adventurer’s guild in its own capacity acts as mediator. If possible, please fill it out … that way, instead of one person operating by themselves, several people working together will decrease the death rate.” (Usagi-chan)

The reason was considerably grounded.

In the first place one could acknowledge that clans were made for that useful reason. And furthermore it caused the mortality rate of adventurers to decrease and the completion rate of requests to increase.

For this reason the adventurer’s guild might have set this up for rookie adventurers. In order to make good use of human resources they use their influence to act as mediator like this. Luru thought in conjecture.

However, this talk was of no concern for Luru and Iris.

“Iya, in that case, for us … that is … such mediation and the likes isn’t particularly necessary.” (Luru)

As he said so, Luru retrieved the letter of introduction and the clan admission agreement he had been entrusted by Gran.

Thereupon, the receptionist girl opened the envelope and began to read its contents.

In the meanwhile Luru and Iris began to fill out the required data on the necessary documents. Afterwards they took out the required amount of one silver coin as registration fee and handed the money collectively to the girl who appeared to have finished reading.

The girl received it with a nod and talked about the agreement document.

“I see … you have already been invited into a clan, that is. And in addition to that, “Seekers of the Ages – Elam・Kupidor” desu~ … Isn’t that an elite clan at the peak of its popularity? … How nice~ … I will handle the formalities then. Because it is a clan that isn’t easy to join … you two are lucky, that is.” (Usagi-chan)

With these words the girl placed the written documents into a device that resembled a magic tool for transferring the information.

As it caught Luru’s eyes he inquired on the functions of the device. Apparently that device was a magic tool which was able to process and store vast amounts of information within. It was one of the important magic tools the adventurer’s guild used, he was told.

It would appear that the production of the magic tool was mostly in the hands of the olden elven race.

As a result, it beat the performance hands down in comparison to the human race implementation of the tool.

Such was the degree of technological superiority of the olden elven race. However it wasn't overly surprising, if one saw and considered the skilled use of magic of Yuumis. Thus the technological gap might not be that unnatural.

If that was the average of the olden elven race, and even if it wasn't the average, existences similar to Yuumis wouldn't be that rare. It seemed to be the level of the ones called olden elves nowadays.

Even now the receptionist girl was fiddling with a magic tool which was a device produced by them.

Like that, the information of Luru and Iris finished being stored away and the girl once again turned around towards the two. She handed each a piece of parchment.

"Well then, the adventurer registration and the clan admission procedure has been completed for the two of you. Here, this proof serves as verification that you are adventurers. This is your adventurer's proof." (Usagi-chan)

Looking at it, it was a brown oblong plate. Luru's name and the village name he was born were written on it.

That village, because it belonged to the territory of Cadiz Nora (T/N: >> Kadisunora <<), was recorded as Cadiz (T/N: >> Kadisu <<) village.

Furthermore there was a field called “Class.” “Low elementary rank” was written there. Apparently this was called the adventurer’s rank.

When Luru took a look on Iris’ plate, it was identical except the name.

“Regarding this class section, how far can you rise up?” (Luru)

As it caught his attention, he asked this question. The girl replied,

“It has been arranged in following sequential order: Elementary rank, intermediate rank, advanced rank and finally special rank. Also, for each rank there are low, medium and high sub-rank classifications. For that reason there are 12 classes in total ranging from low elementary rank up until high special rank.

Please understand that for rookie adventurers it has been decided that they would start at low elementary rank.

Concerning this, although you have a recommendation of your clan it still can’t be changed …” (Usagi-chan)

That is to say, it might not be such a flexible system after all. Considering this, it is an issue of rising steadily with hard work. Luru thought.

The receptionist girl interrupted his thoughts with a “But” to supplement further information.

“It is possible to raise the class immediately if one is skilled … that is if one is competent enough. That’s how it was set up. Therefore, do your best to keep at it. Please also remember, the higher your evaluation, the higher the reward as well.” (Usagi-chan)

Someone skilled would be judged with a decent evaluation. That was the difference.

Regarding this as an incentive for one’s work, Luru could only agree as it corresponded to his own style.

With the difference of having true strength, Luru and Iris could probably advance to the next rank before long. Considering it like that, he was able to look forward to an enjoyable future.

The receptionist girl continued,

“Also, concerning the detailed regulations, they are written down on that parchment. Please make sure to read it carefully.” (Usagi-chan)

Apparently I am supposed to understand the rules by myself.

You are not going to explain them, huh? Just as Luru was questioning this in his mind, the girl continued,

“I will explain them if you cannot read the letters. I don’t mind explaining them to you right away either. However it will take some time

as it is quite long. Besides, generally as long as your actions are in concert with common sense, you won't get into conflict with the rules either.

Completing requests, the necessity of reporting it in case of failing the request's achievement, basic self-responsibility, and such things like that …" (Usagi-chan)

Just those three being the required minimum, that's going too far. There are not few who can't even abide these rules, he had heard from rumors.

And apparently just by keeping these three rules, you wouldn't be able to get into conflict with the basic rules either. In that case, there was no problem.

Confirming with a glance that Iris had no further questions either, she returned a nod that there was nothing unusual.

The girl confirmed it with an agreeing nod too and then said.

"… With this you two are officially called adventurers. Congratulations!" (Usagi-chan)

She declared this in a loud enough voice that it resounded within the entire adventurer's guild. Practically everyone on the first floor of the adventurer's guild's building was able to hear it.

Those adventurer-senpais in addition to the guild staff members looked at Luru and Iris with bright smiling faces and blessed them with an

applause.

Adventurers being no more than a violent bunch or similar, that impression might be a mistake. While thinking such, he returned the applause with a bow towards them.

As they thanked and were about to leave the reception desk, the girl held them back once more.

“A-A-Ano … a-ato, t-this” (Usagi-chan)

While she stammered this, she handed them a parchment.

It was a handout leaflet. “The 700th Royal Capital Fighting Tournament” was written on it in dancing letters and below that a duel between two knights was portrayed.

“This is?” (Luru)

He asked while tilting his head to the side.

“Next month the fighting tournament will open in this royal capital … if you are confident in your skills, it will be a good idea to participate, I think. Since it is possible to get good experience as rookie adventurers, I recommended it to you.” (Usagi-chan)

I see. Certainly the danger of losing one’s life in a fighting tournament is several degrees lower than fighting monsters and it also enables one to

learn a few things.

Choosing this as an objective is easier for rookie adventurers and such an event lifts their motivation, too.

However, Luru and Iris appearing in such fighting tournament wouldn't be a good idea. Therefore he said,

"Thanks for recommending it but we won't participate." (Luru)

"Ah … is that so? …" (Usagi-chan)

The girl replied while powerlessly hanging her ears down in disappointment.

Luru who was somehow unable to endure her state,

"Ah, I am sure someone from our clan will take part though. Depending on the circumstances, I will consider looking at it." (Luru)

finished saying something like that.

Upon hearing this, the girl's expression directly changed with a *paaatto*1 while Luru smiled wryly. After this, Luru and Iris left the reception desk.

Just before departing from the reception desk.

“Ah, I, my name is Allyn (T/N: >> Arin <<). I look forward to working with you.” (Allyn)

Given that she introduced herself, the two waved back to her.

And then Iris whispered,

“Oji-sama, does that kind of type suit you? What do you think of her?” (Iris)

Because she asked something like that seriously, Luru was puzzled.

“Being lively is good, isn’t it?” (Luru)

He replied. (T/N: Yep, enter yet another totally dense MC)

However, that answer seemed to be dissatisfying for Iris.

She began anew,

“No … ano, saying it another way, her chest, does it suit your tastes?” (Iris)

As he listened to her, he turned his head and looked at that part of Allyn.

“… Maa, everyone likes what they like, no? I don’t recall any memories about what Bacchus liked …” (Luru)

He answered something like that.

Yet, Iris still seemed to be dissatisfied with his answer after all.

“Enough talking about the circumstances of otousama! … Aa, mou. It’s fine. I understand, oji-sama. It was a mistake to ask oji-sama. It seems saying any more …” (Iris)

Holding back something, she began to walk briskly. Luru, despite being puzzled by that reaction, followed as well.

Afterwards, in order to report to the clan for the moment, he faced the exit of the adventurer’s guild in order to leave.

don With such bad timing Luru bumped into someone and staggered backwards.

Apparently the other party was afflicted by a similar state as they staggered slightly and fell back.

Luru immediately recovered and planned to apologize. But just as he looked at the other’s face he recognized a dearly missed face there.

Since he left his native village several months ago, he hadn’t seen that face for quite a while.

He was surprised and overjoyed at the same time.

At the moment he tried to raise his voice due to the reunion, an angry voice was audible in the back of the dearly missed face in front of Luru.

“Oi kora, you! Apologize to Rusty-senpai!!” (Moron A)

Saying this and jumping up was a vigorous boy apparently in the same age group as Luru.

Being taken aback by the expression, Luru and Rusty watched that boy’s face.

However, without reading the mood, the boy continued.

“This person here, he is a rising star with the biggest achievements as rookie these days. An amazing person! And yet, what are you … suddenly bumping into him! Apologize! Don’t you understand! The color of the adventurer’s proof he holds. You newbie!” (Moron A)

Towards such terribly threatening attitude, Luru continued to listen to the words without saying anything in return.

Rusty tried to say something but wasn’t able to.

And then their eyes met and Rusty wore an apologetic expression.

Somehow Luru understood that expression.

Ah, this child, it must be one of the aforementioned children Gran talked about.

And while that boy was stating various things praising Rusty to no end, the listening Luru became quite amused and laughter began to gush forth.

“… Pupu” (Luru)

Missing the reason for the laughter, the boy at the back was at his wit’s end, while Rusty clearly understood it and thus expressed a face brimming with shame.

However, that embarrassed state was not passed on to the boy.

The boy perceived the situation of Luru bursting into laughter as an insult.

“You … You are laughing ?!” (Moron A)

Saying something like that, he tightened up and increasingly lost his temper.

“N, No … that’s not my intention at all … pufu” (Luru)

Luru's character was such, that once he passed a certain point he wouldn't be able to stop easily any more, like in this situation.

Iris who knew about this character trait didn't find it particularly unusual. No one would understand this as apology though. Rather, looking at it objectively, Luru was stirring up the situation. Thus Iris clapped a hand on the forehead and shook her head.

I should have Luru and the boy talk to each other, huh? Otherwise this misunderstanding will continue without conclusion.

"Okay, a duel it is then!" (-)

Came from the surrounding next to Luru. Luru became crestfallen while saying "How did it come to this conclusion …"

That completely overdoes this matter. Ah, with this we will finally be able to talk normally, Luru judged.

At that moment a single parchment dropped from Luru's pocket on the ground.

Moreover it drew the attention of Luru and the boy.

And then, the boy understanding the content, which was about the fighting tournament in the royal capital next month, decided to settle the current situation on that occasion.

The method of settling it, was: Advancing to a high rank by winning in the fighting competition. It was good since it could be called simple and easy to understand. The only question seemed to be, how the boy planned to make Luru understand the strength of Rusty with this method.

Among other things there were such words inserted as reason such as “Rusty-senpai’s and our levels are different.” and “We will most likely make it up until the third preliminary match. Rusty-senpai might make it to the main competition.”

Because he obviously respected Rusty from the bottom of his heart, Luru hesitated to deal with it appropriately.

Because Rusty heard these words from the rear as well, he seemed to have fainted in agony looking at him from the standpoint of Luru. Rusty was unable to say anything.

While thinking about the various talks later, Luru wondered about the fate forcing him to participate in the fighting tournament and breathed a sigh.

◆◇◆◇◆

“Just a minute! Listen, everyone!” (Yuumis)

Yuumis leaped into the bar on the first floor of “Seekers of the Ages – Elam・Kupidor” headquarters while announcing this.

Discovering that she wore an amused expression, Gran could easily read and understand her expression at one glance. As he had encountered such situations many times already, he knitted his brows. Yet he asked reluctantly.

“What is it?” (Gran)

“Actually, you know …” (Yuumis)

And like that, Yuumis opened her mouth to talk about the subject. Including Gran, everyone from “Seekers of the Ages – Elam・Kupidor” floated an expression similar to Yuumis as a result.

After that, the members of that capricious clan began to discuss and only finished after they reached a decision.

Among them also were Mii and Yuri who returned after spending several days completing their request.

They received various instructions from their adventurer-senpais.

In order to look for Rusty’s group they immediately headed towards the adventurer’s guild.

Translation Notes

1 ぱあああっと … I tried to find some clue as for a proper definition of that .. but to no avail. “Patto” would mean sudden/in a flash … so in the context it does make sense. The extension of the word probably indicates the action of her expression brightening up suddenly. My conjecture at least.

Chapter 28 – Strange Mood

After the guild registration was completed, Luru considered to return to the clan. Rusty and company also began to walk. Just as Rusty was just about to approach Luru, Mii and Yuri suddenly came though the entrance of the adventurer's guild full of vigor and dragged Rusty away.

In that short moment, Luru and Iris threw them a look conveying the implicated words of「It's been a while」.

Even so, from one moment to the other the whole situation ended leaving them dumbfounded thinking "What was that about?"

The boy sticking to Rusty seemed to be likewise thrown off guard.

"… Mii-senpai and Yuri-senpai, just what the hell has happened?" (Moron A)

While saying something like this, he inclined his head to the side looking puzzled.

Those two are treated as senpais as well, huh? He suppressed a chuckle. But maybe something has happened that required Rusty's assistance?

Luru couldn't tell at all.

However it is clear that I won't understand anything while standing around and pondering about it here either.

Luru and Iris decided to return to the clan headquarters as soon as possible.

I think its likely that the boy only now returned from his request before he had the chance to return to the clan, Luru thought.

The boy walked away from Luru's group in the opposite direction. He was heading towards the reception desk in the inner part of the adventurer's guild.

Seeing this, Luru recalled, come to think of it, he accepted a request to gather medicinal herbs.

Certainly, on a closer examining look, a bag for storing the medicinal herbs dangled on the back of the boy.

According to Gran's story, the party of the boy seemed to be made up by three people. But the situation now was that there was no more than one person here at the moment.

The other two might have returned to the clan and are certainly in the middle of running other errands right now.

Before heading to the reception desk the boy turned around once more.

"Well, since I am going to report the successful completion of the

request … You, don’t forget our agreement, yo! … Ah that’s right, my name is Gaia (T/N: >> Gaya <<)! Yours ?!” (Moron A) (T/N: Most annoying person in this story so far, I refuse to call him by his name!)

Why do you introduce yourself suddenly at this place?

Luru didn’t expect this to happen. But then he immediately remembered the reason.

Him, and Luru as well, would enter the Fighting Tournament.

Thus it couldn’t be helped since they wouldn’t otherwise know how far the other party advanced after entering the Fighting Tournament without knowing their name.

For that reason he introduced himself. Such was the situation.

To introduce himself in such situation is worth a lot of points in my eyes, certainly he is basically a polite boy, Luru judged his efforts.

Probably without the relatively severe language, the meeting with Luru might have not been this bad.

Carelessly colliding with his revered senpai and furthermore making publicly fun of them in ridicule, looking at it like that, his attitude was to be expected.

As Luru comprehended that, he gave his own name while nodding in

agreement.

"My name is Luru … and this is Iris." (Luru)

Taking the opportunity he added the name of the silver-haired girl standing next to him as well.

However the boy called Gaya paid no particular attention to Iris.

"Understood, Luru! Let's each do our best! Maa, to reach Rusty-senpai, the feeling to be on par with him! Such a challenge doesn't really equal to being a punishment!" (Moron A)

He said something like this and ran towards the reception desk.

The gradually leaving appearance of Gaya was visible.

"… He doesn't seem to be such a bad kid." (Iris)

Iris muttered.

Luru shared her view.

"Because he belongs to that clan, I don't think we will have that many problems with him. He is merely reckless due to his youth." (Luru)

Longing for the youth that had passed long ago already, Luru turned

his sight towards the slightly unbecoming 14-years old boy. Iris suddenly smiled in order to tease him.

"… If oji-sama says so, but your persuasive power is lacking." (Iris)

Iris said.

◆◇◆◇◆

When they returned to the clan, they couldn't understand the strange mood hanging in the air for some reason.

As they left this morning the bar-room on the first floor was full of noise and yet still in a composed manner. The clan members open-heartedly talked with Luru and Iris. But now this feeling was completely gone.

Though even if you said this, it wasn't like they were particularly cold towards them now either.

How to put it? It's almost as if they would be hiding something. Or perhaps I should say scheming something? It feels like such restless mood is dwelling here.

What in the world is going on?

While being puzzled, Luru and Iris sat down at the counter of the bar on the first floor in order to eat their lunch.

They decided to tell their order to Chiffon who was busily cooking various dishes behind the counter.

By the way, as for the price to eat and drink here, the clan didn't take more money from its members than the raw materials would originally have cost.

Of course that didn't mean that Chiffon received no salary. She was paid from the assets the clan held onto.

It wasn't necessary to pay the price directly at the shop either, they were told as much.

"Chiffon … please give us some lunch." (Luru)

After telling her this, she affirmed it with a nod while smiling. And then she said in a slightly lowered voice,

"Roger desu~ … Even so, I am somehow sorry, you know …" (Chiffon)

In regards to this way of speaking, Iris inquired further while tilting her head to the side.

"Apologizing, huh? Because … of this somehow unspeakable mood?" (Iris)

"Yes, yes, that desu~ … even though all of it is Yuumis' fault to begin with …" (Chiffon)

While preparing and cooking Chiffon told them about the situation.

As a matter of fact, Yuumis had been listening in at the time when the exchange between Luru and the boy Gaya occurred in the adventurer's guild.

As she heard about the two entering the Fighting Tournament, she immediately rushed back here.

After that she told the clan members about the situation in the conversation she had heard from Luru's group. Because it sounded interesting they decided to liven up things by backing them up with everything they got.

Having been told about the circumstances only up until there, Luru breathed a sigh in disgust.

"No matter how much time passes, the degree of Yuumis' stupidity can't be cured …" (Luru)

She was a woman who took the initiative to crawl into ruins and risked getting caught in traps in the process.

Moreover, it was only for the reason that it was somehow interesting.

Additionally, Gran, who was dragged into her mess on countless occasions, could only be called pitiful.

However, this time that Gran apparently couldn't restrain her either.

As a result, Luru became curious and asked,

"What happened with Gran? Did he approve of this?" (Luru)

Considering this somehow unspeakable mood within the clan, it is unthinkable he didn't perceive this situation first.

Luru gave up on thinking about it yet the reason still bothered him.

Without stopping to use her hands skilfully to carry on with the cooking at all, Chiffon replied

"Actually he did approve, you know~ … He said something like "Those two will hit off well in the end." too … therefore, he didn't oppose it much in the end." (Chiffon)

Although you could tell she was astonished, her hands didn't stop.

Gradually the meat and vegetables were stir-fried. Moreover Chiffon blended them with her specially made seasoning to raise its refinement.

A fine aroma began to spread.

The fragrance even seemed to spread outside the bar-room.

One-by-one the the city's people were lured into entering the bar. They sat down on the seats and started to place their orders.

Not just Chiffon was working at the bar, several waiters and waitresses were employed as well.

Chiffon continued.

"Because of that, you know. It can't be helped that I wasn't able to tell Luru-kun and Iris-chan yet … You two, from today onwards, were supposed to officially live here on the third and fourth floor. Did you know about this?" (Chiffon)

This bar, because ordinary customers were allowed to enter as well, it meant that it wasn't always only members of the clan "Seekers of the Ages – Elam・Kupidor" who stayed here.

However, starting from the second floor it was for the exclusive use of "Seekers of the Ages – Elam・Kupidor." Only the first floor was different in this regard.

The building itself apparently belonged to Yuumis personally. At the founding of the clan she seemed to have contributed it.

As Yuumis didn't know what to do with it, it wasn't a problem for her in the end.

And furthermore, the third and fourth floor each served as male and female dormitory for the members excluding those who possessed their own houses.

Still, all of the clan members followed their daily life here.

Because of Gran and Yuumis admitting us to the clan, we received the rights to use the lodgings here and it had been decided that we would transfer to this place. Judging the explanation we heard from Chiffons, those plans seem to have been thrown into disarray somehow.

Luru inquired what this was about.

“Although that’s how it was supposed to be, is something actually wrong? Something going quite wrong at this late hour could be called quite troublesome, too. It is a bit too late now to suddenly vacate the lodgings. It would be quite harsh to start looking for a new place to stay in now.” (Luru)

Iris followed up with nodding in agreement to this, too.

“You are absolutely right. As one would expect, sleeping outdoors while being within the city would feel awkward … Besides I’d rather not be looked upon with cold eyes while outside after all. Well, you might avoid those stares if you went to the slums. But me and Onii-sama would stand out too much there and most likely get involved into troubles.” (Iris)

Really, what kind of talk is that? And even more, for what kind of reason? From the beginning, I will disagree to picking such a choice.

However, it seems I am overthinking things a bit.

Chiffon continued with her explanation next. There was no suitable place to sleep outdoors nor was it anything good for the body to do so.

Chiffon said.

“Of course I won’t say such cruel words. It’s not about that. The matter is about another place you can stay at since staying at the clan headquarters isn’t possible. You wouldn’t be able to guess, but Yuumis-san has lived for a quite long time in the royal capital. It’s not even clear how many properties she actually owns here~ … Couldn’t you simply move to one of the previously mentioned properties?” (Chiffon)

Yuumis was a member of the Old Elf race.

They had a far longer life span than the people of the human race. As a result, apparently there were not few Old Elves who came to the city and became wealthy over the long time.

Yuumis served as good example for this. She seemed to be a splendidly wealthy person.

From the fact that she was a famous adventurer you could say it was kind of natural that she had no issues with money. It wasn’t that strange at all.

To Lulu, Gran was the right type to have access to easy money since he couldn't be thought of as a wealthy person without trying to be rude.

Doubting Chiffon proposal for the problem at hand, Luru said.

"In this case there is no need to sleep outdoors. If you were to separate us, there would be no problem in the first place … Why are you this particular about it?" (Luru)

Hereupon Chiffon hesitatingly replied,

"With this we are returning to the beginning of the explanation~ … Yuumis-san said, they would back you up with everything. The fact that Luru-kun and Iris-chan are a kind of shishou to Rusty-kun's party is unknown to Gaya's group! Let's keep it like that! … Therefore, if you lived in the dormitory at the clan headquarters, it could end up in a troublesome situation~ ." (Chiffon) (T/N: At this point, I would have told her to f*** off and left that stupid clan of theirs.)

Iris nodded in agreement to this explanation.

"I see … In the end both, Onii-sama and that boy Gaya, are elementary level adventurers. If he knew about the real shape of the one he challenged to a match in the Fighting Tournament, he would hold a grudge over this matter?" (Iris)

"Yes, yes, that's it~ … Gaya wasn't aware of the circumstances when he picked a fight. Yuumis-san and Gran-san thought it to be funny~ … Since that's the case, wouldn't it be interesting to see how he will be scared out

of his wits by Luru's performance in the Fighting Tournament? Of course, if you two refuse this method, they said they would give up on it … What do you think?" (Chiffon)

After she said this, Luru and Iris thought for a little while.

Even though the reasoning of those guys couldn't be called anything else but being in bad taste, it slightly fit as a way of surprising someone even if you couldn't tell this to a child.

As there isn't anyone who really receives a disadvantage by their little scheme, it should be fine, Luru thought.

Both, Luru and Iris, could firmly secure a house this way. Furthermore, as Luru apparently was in the eyes of that Gaya boy of the same rank in ability as himself, he would be enthusiastic to train in order to absolutely not lose to Luru.

Like that Luru would become the target of a youngster with a promising future. Since this didn't change from his time as Maou, his heart was leaping in enjoy in anticipation.

Besides, a dark horse suddenly appearing in the Fighting Tournament might become interesting in its own way, is what he also thought.

As I have already become a member of the clan, it might be difficult to conceal this fact … roughly considering this, he asked Chiffon.

"The Fighting Tournament doesn't particularly list the name of the clan

a participant belongs to~ . Therefore, if you want to hide it, there is no real reason for you to mention it either … Will you hide it and enter? I see, that's a man's romance for you~ ." (Chiffon)

Showing her understanding, she broadly grinned and laughed.

With this the problem really was completely resolved.

Luru nodded and then confirmed it with Iris.

"I will go to the place Yuumis has prepared for me. I think it's fine for me to stay there for a while, too. What about you, Iris?" (Luru)

Iris seemed to have thought about it a bit, too. Since the time they met, Luru's supremely principle-bound way of thinking hadn't changed. Even as a child he displayed the same.

"Of course, there won't be any objection from me … Besides, just the two us, Onii-sama and I …" (Iris) (T/N: Yep, this totally reminds me of Miyuki!)

Even if only a little, from her small mouth this declaration of her own personal desire escaped revealing something similar to her feelings, but Luru (T/N: of course) didn't notice it.

Chiffon's ears caught it though.

"I see~ . I see~ ." (Chiffon)

Because she nodded with a *kaku kaku*, Iris pressed her index finger on her mouth and silenced her with a「Shhh！」.

License Issues: Update

Heyas folks,

as I told you in a previous post, I was contacted by a law attorney regarding the translation of Kuro no Shoukanshi and Yomigaeri no Maou.

As this law attorney represents the company Overlap, they asked me to heed their legal notice until August, 10th or in other words tomorrow.

I used last week to check on the legal situation concerning translation of publicly published web novels and on further examination (reading law text can really hurt your brain) I deemed the removal of the content unavoidable.

I tried contacting the author and the attorney in order to get some kind of statement or to overturn the situation but I got nil response. In order to not be dragged into some kind of lawsuit due to copyright infringement, I don't see any other possibility as the one mentioned above.

I know many of you will be unhappy with this decision but I prefer preserving this blog and shield myself from having to pay money over continuing the translation of a web novel.

As for the extra chapter I owe you guys, I haven't forgotten about it and will take care of that once things have calmed down a bit (although naturally it won't be hosted on this blog).

The already existing content will be removed before the next release at 10 PM GMT. Of course I won't discourage anyone to pick up either of those series as you are all free to do as you like. ^ ^

As for the future plans, I got an idea or two, but you will have to wait for another update until a final decision has been set. ;)

With greetings,

Shasu

Chapter 155 – Unwanted Authority *

"…Having a healthy body is wonderful, isn't it? It's been a while since I've felt like this."

Said Zoë, checking her body with a smile.

The chief symptom of Disconnected Mana Disease was that your body felt heavy and became gradually unable to move, and if left untreated would eventually become fatal.

For Soranju's sake, Zoë had left her disease untreated for quite a long time after its outbreak, and that was why she ended up collapsing.

Having weakened to that extent, she was bound to require a fair amount of physical strength and willpower, so Luru thought quite well of her for making it this far, as well as for the fact that she had been behaving quite energetically up until now.

In truth, she was probably just acting.

Even in her condition she probably bluffed because didn't want to show weakness in front of people she had never seen before.

Zoë was in the military, so she was probably much too used to that.

But there was no need for that anymore.

Iris was of the same race as her, and Soranju was her foster daugher.

——Only I'm left out

thought Luru for an instant, but in the past he was Zoë's superior.

Leaving how Zoë felt aside, objectively you could say that there was no need to worry about Luru harming her.

However, it seemed that the fact that for some reason a human boy was there, along with an ancient demon and her daughter, was on Zoë's mind.

Whilst checking her healthy body by rolling her shoulders, and standing on her tip-toes and the like, she asked,

"Speaking of which, I've been wondering about this for a while now, but who might that boy be? Is it the person who woke up Iris-chan the way Soranju woke me up?"

Zoë had guessed this based on the fact that they didn't hide Iris' race in their conversation.

She was correct.

However, the reason that they didn't hide Iris' true identity wasn't because he had woken her up.

In the first place, there wasn't a need to hide it from Luru.

At that point, Iris remembered that she hadn't told Zoë about Luru's identity yet, and looked at Luru with a difficult expression.

It was probably because it was hard to say.

However, even for Luru, saying something like "I am His Majesty, the almighty Demon King" was a bit too questionable, so he was troubled as well.

But the option to keep silent didn't exist.

From here on there was a lot he wanted to talk about, and at some point it would become incredibly suspicious to continue hiding it.

Since there was no other way, as he gathered his will and was about to name himself in a slightly lame way when Iris opened her mouth first.

“No… Umm, certainly this personage is the one who had roused me, but…”

“I see, I see[hehh, sou nanda]. It’s quite rare to find a human who an ancient demon ruin will open its doors too. You’re amazing, aren’t you?”

said Zoë, as she began rubbing Luru’s head, and treating him like a child.

In fact from Zoë’s appearance, were she a human she would be in her early 20s, and because Luru was 14, treating him as a child certainly wasn’t wrong, but Iris’ face spasmed a little, and from that moment, she made an expression as though gathering her willpower, and said,

“Zoë-san. Umm… This is dreadfully difficult to say, but that personage is…”

“…? Yes?”

Zoë tilted her head in confusion at Iris’ serious expression, but properly lent her an ear.

While all this was happening, for some reason she hadn’t stopped patting his head.

Zoë gave off the scent of an adult, and because she smelled nice Luru didn’t find it particularly unpleasant, but Iris was beginning to give off a slightly sullen atmosphere.

Iris then spoke.

“That personage is His Majesty, the Demon King. He is the 100th Demon King, His Majesty Luruslia Nord.”

In contrast to Iris who looked a little satisfied having declared this, Zoë seemed to space out a little.

“Ohh, I see[hehh, sounanda]… You’re His Majesty the Demon King, huh? I see…? His Majesty… the Demon King… His Majesty the Demon King!? Ehh!?”

As those words sank into her, her complexion gradually changed, and then drawing her hand back, she looked very carefully at Luru’s face.

Then shaking her head in relief, she said,

“Iris-chan, geeez, this again? It’s not good to try and deceive me, you know~? This boy is a human. Even his mana… doesn’t seem that great, you know? I seee. Just now was one of those “ancient demon race” jokes, wasn’t it?”

Neither Luru nor Eris had ever heard of such a joke before, but looking at Zoë carefully, you could see that she was running a cold sweat.

It seemed that she was quite confused.

However, just now that cold sweat began to disappear.

This was probably because having seen Luru’s face and mana, she confirmed that he was obviously a human.

However, though it felt like they were bullying her, and they felt terribly sorry about that, they had to tell the truth as the truth.

Regarding his mana, in the past he had often released it in order to pressure people.

To Zoë who had probably seen Luru from a distance back in the day, it was impossible to tell that Luru who had his mana hidden was actually the demon king.

That's why Luru said to Zoë,

"Ahh… Zoë. I can understand that you don't believe me, but… I was once the demon king. Right now I'm the son of a lower class human noble, Luru Cadisnola though."

But Zoë didn't believe him.

Flapping her hand before her face, she said,

"Geeeez, this again… Um, Luru was it…? Luru-kun, are you the one who taught Iris-chan the joke?"

and so on.

This too is something that can't be helped huh, thought Luru as his gaze met with Iris, and he then decided to release the mana he had hidden deep within his body.

Though he couldn't release the same amount of mana as in the past, the quality of the mana, and the wavelength was something that Zoë would probably remember.

So he thought.

He steadily brought together mana from the depths of his body, and

began emitting that mana from every inch of it.

At first Zoë looked at Luru with a puzzled expression, wondering what he was doing, but as the amount of mana released steadily increased, her face began to stiffen.

Only Rigadora seemed happy, as she flew about and began gobbling down the released mana, but even when she did so, it showed no signs of decreasing at all.

Then finally, when the mana there had gone beyond that of a normal demon, and then even beyond those of the demon king's close associates, Zoë understood.

Trembling, she threw her forehead on the floor, and exclaimed in a loud voice,

"I-... I'm terribly... sorry. Y-..., Y-, Your Highness... I had absolutely no idea... that your esteemed personage was alive in this era... J-, just how should I beg pardon for my many acts of insolence?"

Her head was so low that it made you want to marvel at just how low a person could prostrate themselves.

It was to the extent that it'd seem like she'd obey if he told her to spin around three times and bark.

Of course he had no intention of doing so though, and to begin with, he had no intention of ruling over others again after all this time.

It was only because in that era they had needed a symbol to rally under to fight the humans that he had no complaints about being in the position of demon king, but there was no need for that anymore.

That's why he crouched before Zoë, who was trembling in dogeza[prostrating], and said,

"...Please raise your head. You haven't done anything bad anyway. To begin with... you really didn't need to prostrate yourself like that. The demon race————as far as I know, doesn't exist anymore beyond the three of us after all."

However, even being told that, Zoë showed no signs of lifting her head.

Luru was troubled, and asked of Iris,

"Iris... Was I really that scary in the past?"

At those words, Iris thought a little, and said,

"More than 'fear', it was closer to 'awe' I should say. In particular, the majority of the lower ranked solders said that they would be fine with dying for Your Majesty. The words 'may as well be a god' surely existed for Your Majesty, I believe."

To Luru who hadn't particularly acted arrogantly or one-sidedly ordered people around, it was beyond his expectations that Zoë would be this afraid, but it seems that there really was a good reason for it.

Iris continued.

"Your Majesty had rarely appeared on the frontlines but when you did, you possessed enough power to eradicate the human forces in an instant, after all. The only ones who could do something similar were your close associates, or the people who were as strong as them... Moreover, just being by Your Majesty's side was enough to understand that you held power even beyond them. That is why... I believe that Zoë-

san's fear is natural. No, no, it is not as if you were hated, you know? On the contrary, you were the subject of veneration. That is all it is."

Though he had started to wonder if he'd been hated, Iris quickly followed up.

That's great then, thought Luru, and he spoke to Zoë who even now had her head rubbed up against the floor.

"Zoë… Please raise your head."

However, she wouldn't move despite this.

Without a choice, Luru decided to order her.

"Zoë. Raise your head. This is an order."

"Yes, Sir…"

After a short nod, Zoë raised her head.

Her eyes gave off a feeling of dependency close to fanaticism.

Seeing this, Luru understood the words Iris had said.

Certainly, he had seen the soldiers make eyes like that countless times in the past on the battlefield.

He had thought that their abnormal mental state was because of their reliance on Luru, their superior.

However, it seems that his understanding was a little off.

They had plainly been in awe of him.

It seems that was all.

Luru slowly explained to Zoë who was now looking up.

"Zoë… I was certainly the demon king in the past. But now I'm just a human. Just now I ended up giving you an order, but… I don't intend to order you about from now on. So please treat me normally. Like the way you treated Iris just now."

However, Zoë made a bewildered expression upon hearing this.

"No, however, that is… Whether now, or in the past, I am prepared to throw away my life for Your Majesty. If you tell me to jump into a crowd of enemies, I will do so, and if you tell me to die, I will."

It was a terrifying degree of blind faith.

'Did everyone see me this way in the past?', wondered Luru, as he noticed this again in shock.

Iris had been relatively quick to get used to it, so he had thought it was a matter of standing, but it seems that it wasn't the case at all.

Even if he said that he wasn't the demon king anymore, and even if he said it was fine to speak casually, it seems that it was no good.

Soranju watched Zoë and Luru with her eyes wide from shock, and muttered,

"…This is the first time I've seen mother[okaa-sama] like this…"

She did seem to be shocked at Luru's casual confession, but she

understood that it wasn't the time to ask for an explanation so she had been watching them without really cutting in.

Glancing at Soranju, Luru then said to Zoë,

"…You were the one who raised Soranju, right?"

To Luru who had changed the subject, Zoë replied,

"…Yes, Sir."

and nodded.

Luru continued.

"Soranju and I speak to each other on equal terms. Despite this, the parent is speaking to me so reverently; isn't that strange?"

So he said.

However, as for how Zoë interpreted this…

"I was unthorough in raising my daughter… I feel deeply ashamed. However, my daughter is a human. I humbly feel that it cannot be helped that she fails to understand Your Majesty's greatness, and fearsomeness. I beg of you, please be lenient and forgive her…"

She started apologising.

Having come this far, it wasn't at the level of just being humble

anymore.

It was complete submission.

But even so, she still wanted to protect Soranju, so Luru felt that perhaps he could get her to treat him normally if he attacked from this angle.

However, it wasn't something that could be fixed in a day.

Without any other choice, Luru spoke.

"The Soranju thing is fine. On the contrary, I'd be thankful if you talked to me normally… So there's no helping it. There is the saying about taking your words back as soon as they leave your mouth, but… I order you, Zoë. You are to treat me the way you treated Iris just now. Understand? This is an order. You are absolutely not to speak politely to me.[use keigo]"

"H-, however, that would be much too impudent of me!"

"I said it was fine. Or what? You're going disobey such a simple order, despite saying just a moment ago that you'd die for me?"

It was an unpleasant way of speaking that was like abusing his authority, but it was because he felt that there was nothing else left that would be effective on her.

In truth, the authority he was abusing had already disappeared far off in the past, but it seemed that it was still going strong in Zoë even now.

And truly, there was an immediate effect.

"Yes, Sir… If Your Majesty says so, then I shall obey… Luru…-chan? Is

this… fi-, ne, I wonder?”

She was speaking extremely stiffly but… well, for now it was good enough.

However, he didn’t approve of adding -chan behind his name.

“…Can’t you at least make it -kun?”

The moment he said that, Zoë finally relaxed her mouth a little, and smiled.

/Chapter 155 END